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#### REVIEWS.

#### THE TENNYSON BIOGRAPHY.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson. A Memoir. By his Son. In 2 vols. (Macmillan & Co.)

MEMOIR of Tennyson was necessary, A and we take it as we find it. It is a gifthorse—given, perhaps, a little grudgingly; or we have not to regard it too critically if it lacks in frankness, or stops short where a genuine human document would proceed. We have here a smooth instead of a rough Tennyson-a Tennyson as a son sees him, and decides that we shall see him. No doubt the biographer realises this, for he heads his preface with a hitherto unpublished sonnet, in which his father says:

"Ye know that History is half a dream-ay, The man's life in the letters of the man.

For whatever knows us truly, knows That none can truly write his single day, And none can write it for him upon earth."

These are not the best principles on which to set forth on a biography. But the biographer is frank, at any rate, in adver-tising the impossibility of frankness, and in going on to tell us that his book is written, not for its own sake, but to keep out any other. Tennyson, we are told, "disliked the notion" of a biography. "He wished that the incidents of his life should be given as shortly as might be without comment, but that any notes should be final and full enough"—not to give the world the lesson of a great life, but—"to preclude the chance of further and unauthentic biographies." That is what we mean by saying that the

book is a gift-horse.

We take it, then, for what it is. The real Tennyson will stand forth in time. Meanwhile, this Memoir will serve its purpose for a day. It is not proper biography, but once we know the lines on which it runs, we need have few disappointments. It is a book which nearly everybody will like to read; which hardly anyone will want

Tennyson, as a poet, has made his gift to England once for all; he has written what he has written; and his glory as a poet no biographer can magnify and none disturb. Tennyson was himself a very apt courtier, as his letters to the Queen declare, perhaps because he himself lived in a kind of court. His own letters to his correspondents are all of a piece — they deal with his attitude towards his correspondents, very little with any affairs or feelings of theirs. The homage of Browning, rendered with a delightful impetus, is accepted; also that of Fitzgerald; and the letters of both these of Fitzgerald; and the letters of both these men — not intellectually the inferiors of Tennyson on most topics to be discussed, and in some cases his superiors—are ap-proved, disapproved, or tolerated, as the case may be; rarely made a plane for meeting on an equality of thought or speech If the Poet applies to a Cabinet Minister for a favour for a friend the letter is given for a favour for a friend, the letter is given, but not the result of the application—it is the Tennyson application alone that is important. There is a charming letter of homage from Currer Bell, ingenuously saying that she is giving to Tennyson and other admired persons copies of her own and her sister's poems because nobody will buy them. We are glad to know that Tennyson had the pleasure of this letter, but we should have been more delighted still to hear that Haworth had been stirred by an immediate recognition of Emily Brontë's poems in that volume from the poet she admired; we are not even told that he acknowledged the letter. This is only an instance of the book's consistent attitudeit tells us sometimes, in perfectly worthless letters of formal flattery—such as Mr. Froude's—how far Tennyson affected his contemporaries. We knew all that before; and now we should like to know how Tennyson was affected by them. But of this knowledge the reader will be baulked in this book; and perhaps it is as well, for where we have a hint of it it is hardly reassuring. The arrangement is, no doubt, the biographer's; but where Stevenson and Mr. Meredith appear in a list hardly divided from Miss Braddon and Miss Edna Lyall, as among admired novelists, we recognise a certain pervading insensibility to Art, save where the Poet's own work is concerned. Nothing but your own business matters much, you may easily persuade yourself, if you have one idea always, and lack the humour that saves from egotism-

Within these limitations, of which, though they constantly stop the reader short in the biography, we shall say no more in this review, lest we, too, should seem to be un-

he wrote blank verse at eight; for Thomson was the first poet he knew. Pope's translation of the "Iliad," made acquaintance with when he was ten or eleven, set him off composing hundreds of lines in the same metre. Byron, of course, became an absorbing influence a little later, and, equally of course, an influence that passed away. When Byron died, the Lincolnshire boy of fourteen felt that the world was darkened. "Byron is dead" he carved on a rock at Somersby. As the placing of Byron is still in dispute, it is worth while to note the experience of Tennyson, as one born during the Byron rule. In maturity he spoke of Byron to Locker Lampson, saying: "Thanks to Byron, I was more blase at fourteen than I am now. . . . Byron's merits are on the surface. . . . As a boy I was an enormous admirer of Byron, so much so that I got a surfeit of him, and now I cannot read him as I should like to do." Then, when his friend remarked on the omission of the "Isles of Greece" from the Golden Treasury, he "supposed that the editor had discovered some defect in it of which he [Tennyson] was not aware; but he had not read it for years." The first stanza he repeated, saying "That's very fine," but adding: "Thackeray tells me that Samian wine is very wretched stuff." Elsewhere the biographer repeats: "In early boyhood he grapher repeats: "In early boyhood he had been possessed of Byron's poetry, but he could not read it in later life, except, perhaps, 'The Vision of Judgment' and parts of 'Childe Harold' and of 'Don Juan.' He would say: 'Byron is not an artist or a thinker or a creator in the higher sense,' adding, however, that "he is end-lessly clever, and is now unduly depreciated." We know not by whom, for nobody has denied him more than Tennyson denies him here. Of Wordsworth, Tennyson was willing to allow that he was the first of moderns, although he accompanies that admission with an amount of reservation that will strike cold into hot Wordsworthians. Among such we must rank Mr. Aubrey de Vere, whose hand constantly appears through these pages, and never too often. He it is who gives the account of the personal relations between Wordsworth and Tennyson. Mr. de Vere made the acquaintance

of Tennyson very early in the forties, and they called each other by their Christian names at the first, and for more than fifty years after. It is with touching pains to unite those two great poets as closely as may be, then and for ever, that Mr. de Vere tells the story:

review, lest we, too, should seem to be ungracious insisters on one point of view, we give the volumes a warm welcome. They open with a glimpse, one does not say more, of the home-life of the poet as a boy in Lincolnshire. When he was twelve he wrote from Somersby to an aunt in Louth to give her his impressions of Samson Agonistes (he spells it Sampson), and we find him expressing particular admiration for "O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon," a line in which we see Milton as already his master. Thomson of the "Seasons" had been a yet earlier influence, under which "Alfred Tennyson's largeness of mind and of

them, I told him, one flush all over the island, the colour of blood! It would not do. I could not influence his imagination in the least!"

Our own, we confess, is left cold. But we interrupt to say as much, for Mr. de Vere, warming to his theme, proceeds:

"During the preceding year I had had the great honour of passing several days at Rydel Mount with Wordsworth, walking on his mountains and listening to him at his fireside. I told him that a young poet had lately risen up. Wordsworth answered that he feared, from the little he had heard, that if Crabbe was the dryest of poets, the young aspirant must have the opposite fault. I replied that he should judge for himself, and, without leave given, judge for himself, and, without leave given, recited to him two prems of Tennyson:
'You ask me why, though ill at ease,' and 'Of old sat Freedom on the heights.' Wordsworth listened with a gradually deepening attention. After a pause he answered, 'I must acknowledge that these two poems are very solid and noble in thought. Their diction also seems singularly stately."

On another occasion Mr. de Vere saw Wordsworth and Tennyson together, at a dinner given by Mr. Moxon. After dinner, when last words were to be said, Tennyson moved up to Wordsworth:

"He spoke in a low voice, and with a per-ceptible emotion. The old man looked very much pleased, more so, indeed, than I ever saw him look on any other occasion; shook hands with him heartily, and thanked him affectionately."

Wordsworth, it may be added, records this very meeting in one of his letters to his American friend, Prof. Reed: "You will be pleased to hear that he expressed in the strongest terms his gratitude to my writings. To this I was far from in-different."

To these great literary influences, begun so early, must be added the influence of locality. Lincolnshire is to be found on the face of verse after verse throughout his poems. Even the magic of the landscape in "The Lady of Shalott" has its origin amid the flat cornfields of the poet's native county; and the long waves beating on the long sands of its coast held over him to the end of his days the dominion they gained in his boyhood. When the "Poems by Two Brothers"—Alfred and Charles—were published by Jackson, the Louth bookseller, who gave them the generous sum of £20, part of which was paid in kind, the elated poets hired a carriage in which they drove to the coast, fourteen miles distant, and at Mablethorpe "shared their triumph with the winds and waves." "Poems by Three Brothers" the book ought to have been Brothers" the book ought to have been named, for four of the pieces, usually assigned to Charles, were of Frederick's composing. "My father," says the biographer, "could hardly tolerate what he called his 'early rot,'" although his last judgment on it was: "Some of it is better than I thought it was."

The influence of Trinity College, Cambridge, was not great on Tennyson, excepting so far as it gained for him friends — Spedding, Hallam, Brookfield, Milnes, Trench, and the rest—who were, in

in the press, his merits to an unbelieving generation. In 1829 he took the prize medal for his "Timbuctoo" in blank verse; in 1830 he published "Poems, chiefly Lyrical," and in the next year he left the University. The next few years were in-fluential; there was the friendship with Fitzgerald, "faithful Fitz," who met Tenny-son at the house of the Speddings in the son at the house of the Speddings in the Lake country, and saw what afterwards formed part of the contents of the splendid 1842 volume—the "Morte d'Arthur," "The Day-Dream," "Dora," and, among others, "The Lord of Burleigh," the inferiority of which Fitz does not seem to have perceived. In the thirties and forties the family lived at High Beech in Epping Forest, at Tun-bridge Wells, and at Boxley, near Maid-stone. Visits to his beloved Lincolnshire were made when funds allowed-only once or twice do we get allusions to the poverty of those times, when a fare to the neighbourhood of Mablethorpe was a fine too great to be paid. Emily Sellwood, too, lived at Horncastle, in that county. She had been a bridesmaid when her sister married his brother; and her engagement to the Poet was a long affair not unattended by percental was a long affair, not unattended by parental injunctions to the maiden not to write to one who was so ineligible. Indeed, the engagement dragged out for long over a decade; for it was not till 1850 that they were married, his poems then bringing him in a competency. His love of the "central roar" of London drew him, now and again, to lodgings in Norfolk-street, Strand, and he delighted to walk down Fleet-street, dining often at the Cock. "Instead of the stuccoed houses of the West End this is the place where I would like to live," he said to Fitz; but if you look for his London address in later days you will find it in Belgravia. "The Princess," however, published in 1847, was written mostly in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Fitzgerald, who generally knew what he was writing about, rated it lower than much of the work published five years earlier; and he was right. But that was unpalatable truth then; and Fitzgerald, to cover the situation, put his case with extremity. "Like Carlyle," he says, "I gave up all hopes of Tennyson after 'The Princess.'" The biographer has his explanation, to be sure. "Nothing either by Thackeray or by my father," he says, "met Fitzgerald's appreciation unless he had first seen it in MS."

The facts relating to the friendship with Arthur Hallam, and to the publication of "In Memoriam," are so familiarly known that this biography adds little to the history. Even the loss of "the Elegiacs," as Tennyson called them while they were in process, and the recovery of the MS. by Mr. Patmore's persistency pitted against the landlady's statement that the cupboard was bare, will not be new to readers of our columns, and Tennyson's letter to "My dear Coventry," now printed, adds no fresh surprise to the episode. Particularly welcome, indeed, would have been some further account of the friendship between these two poets, very warm in the forties, but untimely ended by the withdrawal of Mr. Patmore into himself

House" is put on record in the biography by the pen of Mr. de Vere, the devoted friend of both poets, but "The Unknown Eros" opens fields where Tennyson could not follow. Nevertheless, the chapter on "In Memoriam" contains a statement of Tennyson's religious sentiments which will commend itself to every reader as the indication of a grave, sincere, and even humble mind. He did not pretend to a knowledge of theology, nor do we claim it for him. He did not treat it as a science largely accepted on the authority of the past; he began again for himself, as it were. One lifetime is not very long for an investigator in any great department of thought; but it was long enough, in Tennyson's case, to bring him to a belief in man's immortality, and in the existence of a God with a conscious personality. The difficulties of Revelation, and especially the great difficulty that is presented by Revelation's avoidance of just those very explanations that the inquirer needs, were constantly in his thoughts. More and more as time passes will the distinctly ethical note of his poetry be recognised. He came to be an individualist in this orthodox sense, that he distrusted large schemes for the general welfare of the world—he believed that each man was his own especial charge. It pleased him, therefore, to do any kindness, or to hear that his poetry-especially "In Memoriam"-had been of use to readers, and this not less when those readers happened to be of the humblest mental capacity. Such testimonies were a true consolation to him as one who wished well to all his fellows, quite apart, as we believe, from any gratification they gave to one who, from the days of his boyhood on the desolate Mablethorpe sands, craved to be popular. He had, indeed, popularity enough and to spare; enough, some would say, to punish him.

There are no surprises in the volumes; unless, indeed, the correspondence with the Queen be accounted such, and this has a social rather than a literary interest. But we note in passing that the Queen sent her Highland Notebook to the Laureate, who praised, among other things, its "pure English," and that, though they wrote often, and lived near one another at times in the Isle of Wight, they met seldom. The last meeting was in 1883, when the Queen, in her private journal, wrote the account of it at Osborne, as follows:

"After luncheon saw the great Poet Tennyson in dearest Albert's room for nearly an hour; and most interesting it was. He is grown very old, his eyesight much impaired. But he was very kind. Asked him to sit down. He talked of many friends he had lost, and what it would be if he did not feel and know that there was another world where there would be no partings; and then he spoke with horror of the unbelievers and philosophers who would make you believe there was no other world, no Immortality, who tried to explain all away in a miserable manner. We agreed that were such a thing possible, God, Who is Love, would be far more cruel than any human being. He spoke of Ireland and the wickedness of ill-using dumb animals: 'I am afraid I think this world is darkened; I dare say it will brighten again.' I told him what a comfort 'In Memoriam' had Milnes, Trench, and the rest—who were, in and his cloud and fire of mysticism. Tenny-truth, his apostles, proclaiming a little later, son's admiration for "The Angel in the again been to me, which pleased him but he

said I could not believe the number of shameful letters of abuse he had received about it. Incredible! When I took leave of him I thanked him for his kindness, and said I needed it, for I had gone through much; and he said: 'You are so alone on that terrible height; it is terrible. I've only a year or two to live, but I shall be happy to do anything for you I can. Send for me whenever you like.' I thanked him warmly."

Social also in its interest we must hold to be the correspondence about the peerage conferred on the Poet by Mr. Gladstone, although there is a good deal of chatter about the honour being accepted in the interests of Literature. Social certainly is the astonishing item that one of Mr. Gladstone, although the contract of stone's difficulties in offering the peerage was that the Poet might insist in going to the House of Lords in his wideawake. Mr. Gladstone, as usual, comes out of the correspondence with Tennyson as a man full of considerateness, the possessor of a mag-nanimity which has, perhaps, been more tried than any man's, and yet has never failed when put to the test. This Memoir is a witness to the genius, gravity, dignity, and essential sincerity of its central figure. Under surface affectations and insimplicities a great and single character.

#### ORIGINAL, FEARLESS, FINE.

History of the Life of Fenelon. By Andrew Michael Ramsay. Translated from the French edition of 1723. With a Bio-graphical Memoir of the Author, Bibliography, and Notes by David Cuthbert-son. (Paisley: T. & R. Parlane.)

It seems at first sight strangely improbable that the son of an Ayrshire Protestant baker should, early in the last century, become the disciple and friend of con-temporary Christendom's greatest Catholic prelate; but those were the relations between the Chevalier Andrew Ramsay and Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambrai. Mystic recognises mystic, and the plebian man from the county of Burns found a fellow spirit in the holy aristocrat of Périgord, courtliest of saints, saintliest of courtiers. Each lived to illustrate the saying of a later expert in "the science of the saints," that "it is a very easy thing for a man to go wrong in spiritual theology, and to stray into the shadow of condemned propositions." But Ramsay, though, indeed, as Hume calls him, "an author of taste and imagination, who was surely no enemy to Christianity," would scarce have survived but for his intimacy with Fénelon, whose faith he embraced, whose doctrines he followed, whose Life he wrote. At best we should know him as one of the innumerable obscurer Mystics, who testify to the soul's thirst in the dry places of the world, but whose testimony is not memorable. Be-coming Fénelon's convert, the captive of his sweetness and strength, Ramsay passed into history. As Gibbon says of himself and Bossuet, "he fell," if fall it was, "by

kings and of their King, yet there is a cordial ings contain the gist of the notorious conhumility and humanity in his carriage. He troversy. "M. de Cambrai," said Mme. humility and humanity in his carriage. He provokes distinguished writers to phrases of distinction. Here is Michelet:

"Who can say by what enchantment he seized and ravished souls? We encounter it in the infinite charm of his correspondence, all mutilated as that is-no other c rrespondence has been more cruelly emended, expurgated, obscured for a purpose. Well! in those fragments, those scauty remains, the fascination is ments, those scanty remains, the tascination is still omnipotent. Apart from the nobility of style, the tone so vivid and refined, revealing the gentleman beneath the apostle, there is something peculiar to himself, a feminine delicacy, which in no way excludes strength, and, in the very subtlety, I know not what penetrating tenderness."

Or take Pater:

"A veritable grand seigneur! His refined old age, the impress of genius and honours— even his disappointments concur with natural graces to make him seem too distinguished (a fitter word fails me) for this world. Omnia vanitas! he seems to say, yet with a profound resignation, which makes the things we are most of us so fondly occupied with seem petty enough. Omnia vanitas! Is that, indeed, the proper comment on our lives, coming, as it does in this case, from one who might have made his own all that life has to bestow? Yet he was never to be seen at court, and has lived here almost as an exile. Was our 'Great King Lewis' jealous of a true grand seigneur or grand monarque by natural gift and the favour of Heaven, that he could not endure his presence?

After speaking of Napoleon, Lord Acton proceeds:

"In another sphere, it is the vision of a higher world to be intimate with the character of Fénelon, the cherished model of politicians, ecclesiastics, men of letters, the witness against one century and precursor of another, the advocate of the poor against oppression, of liberty in an age of arbitrary power, of tolerance in an age of persecution, of the human virtues among men accustomed to sacrifice them to authority, the man of whom one enemy says that his cleverness was enough to strike terror, and another, that genius poured in torrents from his over " his eyes.

That M. Huysmans' hero, the malleus sanctorum, the superior artist in religion, Durtal, should find in a "Job mitré" but "une petite Mystique, ni trop chaude, ni trop froide, un peu moins tiède que celle de Saint François de Sales et surtout beaucoup moins ardente que celle de Sainte Térèse," is no poor compliment to the essential excellence of Monseigneur de Cambrai, to his "sanctified commonsense." Into the tangled and thorny questions of Molinism-Quietism-which made Fénelon's later life a martyrdom and a triumph, we cannot here enter. It had, perhaps, been well for him had he never met with Mme. Guyon and her writings, never written the Maximes des Saints. It is personally painful, even now, to watch Bossuet, "the eagle of Meaux," falling foul of Fénelon, "the dove of Cambrai." revolting to think of the most delicate and mysterious things of faith exposed to and Bossuet, "he fell," if fall it was, "by the impure handling of such men as the anoble hand." For Fénelon is a figure of irresistible charm, rich in grace and in the graces; his presence adorns the courts of his mistress. Two true and witty say-

de Sévigné's daughter, "pleads well the cause of God, but M. de Meaux still better that of orthodoxy; he cannot fail to win the day at Rome." Said Pope Inno-cent XII.: "Cambria has sinned through excess of love for God, and Meaux through want of love to his neighbour." Technically, verbally, Fénelon was wrong; he erred in expression, not in meaning. We cannot agree with Dean Church, that "it was a poor quarrel and a sign of degeneracy." It concerned the weightiest matters of spiritual life. But we agree with him in condemning its accidents and circumstances, its atmosphere and environment of devotee courtiers, and pietism à la grande dame, and social intrigues and jealousies. Mysticism and its exact theology are not for loose and general discussion upon the levels of society, but require retirement, solitude, patience. Take any approved treatise of mystical theology, such as the thousand-paged Institutiones Theologie Mystica of the Benedictine Schram: then imagine Paris of Fénelon's day can-vassing problems and speculations, which even the most learned and experienced of theologians touch but at their perpetual peril. Men and women, whose first effort should have been to keep a few of the Ten Commandments, fell to disputing whether love for God must be absolutely "disinter-ested"; whether they should "desire hell" if God desired it for them; whether anything short of self-annihilation to the will of God were permitted to a Christian. Fine topics of talk among the frou-frou of skirts and the flutter of fans! When Fénelon's book was under examination at Rome, Mme. de Maintenon, we are quaintly told, "did not think herself entitled to enter into an affair which was laid before the Holy See."
Mighty obliging and self-denying of the good lady! There was, perhaps, not a score of persons in France capable of judging the questions at issue, either by their scientific training in theology or by their experience of the spiritual life in its most profound reality. Such a man as Jean Baptiste de Renty, who died shortly before Fénelon's birth, and whose *Holy Life* ranks among the greatest of mystical biographies, was the kind of man to whom these tremendous questions were matters of personal knowledge; but such a man is as rare as the aloe blossom. It was Fénelon's lot to be cast among courtly offices, worldly affairs, relations with the State; c'était Louis XIV. He was not allowed the pastoral seclusion of Francis de Sales; he stood prominently before France—a public man. Yet he never lost the bloom of sincerity and gentleness, nor did his reserved strength ever kindle into passion; he won the hearts of the most unlikely persons. "He was cast," said Lord Peterborough, "in a particular mould, that was never used for anybody else; he is a delicious creature! But I was forced to get away from him as soon as I possibly could; for else he would have made me pious."

very Dupanloup in the discharge of diocesan duties and episcopal superintend-ence; and he discharged at the same time a vast "apostolate of letter-writing," as the director of countless souls. Withal, he was a master in literature; Telémaque is not yet a faded classic, and his dissertations upon oratory and the ancier's are full of a rich purity in style and thought. He wrote the first important modern treatise upon the education of women: he was at all points original, fearless, fine. "Unction" in him was not that sickly-sweet sensibility and sentimentality which in French religious writers is apt to usurp the name: it was a veritable gift of love, eloquent and winning proprio motu, but never affectedly or foolishly effusive. His "Spiritual Letters" abound in salutary severities in the spirit of St. Teresa, though without her inimitable humour and homely terseness of speech. He is not languishing and rapturous, but a very wise and simple Christian, who uses a gracious and graceful style, and conveys piety with the pleasing politeness of good French. He had not the magnificent Bossuet's thunder, that organ music rolling over the deaths of princes and chaunting the procession of the ages: Fénelon is the Sophocles to Bossuet's Æschylus, the Spenser to his Milton. The elegance of holiness was upon him, as well as the loftier beauty; he was much of a George Herbert, though nobler, fashioned upon a greater plan. An essential candour shines about his memory; it purifies and freshens his not very wholesome age, in which singlehearted men were rare. His world was aware of his eminence, his solitary distinc-tion; he won to himself even such men as Marlborough. "If I am sorry I have not taken Cambrai, it is not for the honour of the conquest as to have had the pleasure of seeing so great a man."

Mr. Cuthbertson has deserved well of

literature in producing this book, with its vivid sketch of Ramsay and its useful annotations. Indeed, one is tempted to suggest that he would do well to write a monograph or brief biography of the Chevalier, whom most of us know merely through Spence's "Anecdotes." For Ramsay has a certain importance in the history of metaphysics, or rather of "theosophies"; and Fénelon's secretary, the tutor of Charles Edward and of "Henry IX.," Cardinal of York, is a picturesque and arresting figure.

#### DAVID WRIGHT.

The Power of an Endless Life, and other Sermons. By David Wright, late Vicar of Stoke Bishop. (Rivingtons.)

A VOLUME of David Wright's Sermons is furnished with a preface by Canon Ainger; and to the many who are complete strangers to the name upon the title-page, the recommending words of a distinguished and interesting preacter, who was likewise a friend, will be a serviceable introduction. Canon Ainger has held for the last several years,

Mastership of the Temple, but a Bristol Canonry. In residence in Bristol the Master of the Temple first became acquainted with the vicar of Stoke Bishop, and there he had the opportunity of appreciating him. When David Wright died, only a year ago, he had been for five-and-thirty years vicar of Stoke Bishop, and he had been little else. He was a born preacher, uniting in himself so many of the fine preacher's finest qualities, yet entirely and intensely, though never aggressively, individual. But, though a born preacher, he never preached to crowds, and rarely to congregations consisting for the most part of the intellectually distin-guished. If we remember rightly, in the very latest days of the ministry of F. D. Maurice at St. Peter's, Vere-street, David Wright preached a few sermons there—filling Mr. Maurice's place; but if he did so it was probably in the vacation—the congregation of St. Peter's, Vere-street, must have been out of town at the time. Once or twice, at least, his voice was heard in Westminster Abbey; and, as regards mere local recognition, it is true that there was bestowed on him for a year or so the more or less honorary appointment of Mayor's Chaplain at Bristol; but there, probably, his outward distinctions, such as they were, stopped. Practically he went without the rewards and recognitions of distinguished service and of exceptional capacity. He was valued, of course, and beloved in his own parish, and in the great city which lies upon its borders. In the best sense he must have been to some extent at least "influential." But a hundred smaller men might have exercised an influence as considerable, and would have enjoyed, locally, a consideration as great. The "powers that be"—careful, generally, in their selections for promotion, and guided generally, we do not doubt, by the best motives and by wisdom-were yet for once strangely lacking in the proper initiative when they permitted David Wright to end his labours almost as he had begun themto end them simple vicar of the agreeable country parish where he had taken up his cure of souls thirty-five years before.

In Church newspapers habitually devoted to the discussion of doctrine-in the Guardian, the Record, and the Church Times, for instance—we shall expect to see what it would be almost inappropriate to print here, an analysis of the mind and method of David Wright as a Churchman. Here, in regard to his doctrinal position, it will be enough, or almost enough, to say that he was not a or almost enough, to say that he was not a party man. He was nearer, perhaps, to the Evangelicals than to any others; yet his Evangelicalism was tempered by modern culture, by Broad Church influence, by something, too, that came to it from the graver leaders of the old High Church school. Briefly, and to repeat it, he was not a party man; but his attachment to the Catholic Church and to the Church of England as an institution, was profound and lasting—was perhaps growing in in-tensity to the very end—and his broad and tolerant Christianity, concerned so much with the spirit and so little with the letter, Ainger has held for the last several years, feared no undermining from "modern as readers will remember, not only the thought," and knew no apprehension from the later discoveries of a "Science" apt to be periodically revised or overturned by its own votaries. For David Wright the world of Nature might be pryed into to what conclusions you chose. The world of the Spirit and of the heart of Man at least

Perhaps of his own personality, as of his published sermons, a spiritual gravity and dignity was the main characteristic. His sermons, while wholly devoid of pessimism—or he would scarcely have been Christian at all—had, as a frequent "note," that profound sadness which belongs to the great things of Literature, to the poem or the story which outlasts the fashion of a day. How could they avoid it, and yet have a true outlook on present human life? He was accustomed to read his sermons with absolutely no conscious art, and even little of acquired skill, of delivery; often with some nervousness— in the level and expository passages with some hesitation and shyness—but ever with an abounding sense of reverence and responsibility; with a voice second only in impressiveness and vibrating quality to that of the Bishop of Southwell-a Churchman with whom, whether he knew it or not, he must have been greatly in sympathy. The present writer was an occasional but close listener to his always remarkable and deeply studied sermons, over a period of six or eight-and-twenty years, and, so far as memory may be trusted, they changed but little in character, in method, or delivery. At the end as at the beginning of this prolonged experience of him, it was felt that one was listening to the most personal utterance of a profound though reserved nature—to an utterance for-tified by much secluded meditation, by a deliberation of purpose and a quietude of life hardly attainable by the popular favourite, the celebrity of the busy hour. The Master of the Temple bears tribute to "the originality of thought and intellectual acuteness" of the author of sermons which justify indeed his praise to the full. David Wright was essentially reflective, subtle, stored with deep wisdom. It is claimed for him, by the sponsor we have already named, that he had "an almost ideal pulpit style." And so far as any one man can possess that, doubtless it was possessed by David Wright. On the negative side this is especially true. His style was singularly without fault or technical vice. And at the same time its actual qualities were various and convincing. He could be direct without abruptness; tender without sentimentality; picturesque and vivid without exaggeration; and, at need, satirical without flippancy. You could not, of course, ask him to combine within the limits of one personality every quality that is attractive or valuable in the speech of man to man-to be at once the preacher of a Carême at Notre Dame and Canon Eyton at Westminster, and Ignatius delivering a message from God to London Society. As well invite Schumann to appropriate the qualities of Chopin, or Edmund Kean to add to his own magic the elaborated art of Kemble. But among the masters of the English pulpit David Wright must surely take—and should have taken long ago— his honourable and recognised place. The his honourable and recognised place.

volume which survives him, as he lies quiet in his grave by "that broad water of the West," may be a satisfaction to the thoughtful soul, and is a model for the younger preacher.

#### OLD LONDON.

London Signs and Inscriptions. By Philip Norman. (Elliot Stock.)

This is a good book with faults. One of its faults is that it has not been brought up to date, no trivial drawback in a work dealing with the ever vanishing relics of London's past. It is clear, indeed, that Mr. Norman wrote some of his chapters a long time ago. On p. 5 he speaks of a house in Panyer-alley as "shortly to be pulled down," and adds a note at the bottom of the page stating that this house was demolished in 1892. Why not have altered the text? On p. 76, in dealing with the Bridge House Estate, Mr. Norman writes of the Tower Bridge as in process of building! On p. 104 he tells the reader that at the "Cock" in Fleet-street he "will find excellent fare and the utmost attention from Paul." The excellent fare is still to be had at the "Cock," but everybody knows that Paul no longer serves the hot and hot. Again, on p. 113, Mr. Norman begins to discourse on the "Goose and Gridiron" as if it were still standing by St. Paul's, whereas it was shut up a year or more ago, and has since been razed to the ground, and replaced by the extension of a draper's premises. Elsewhere we read: "A well-modelled bas-relief of a woman's head, probably intended to represent Minerva, is on a house belonging to the Leathersellers' Company at the corner of Old Jewry and Gresham Street." Is it? We think not. The house and its decorations disappeared fully three years ago. Perhaps these mistakes are not very serious; but they are irritating, and they suggest the existence of others. A more serious defect in the book is its digressions. Now digressions are often charming, but they ought not to interfere with business, still less exclude it. Had Mr. Norman's treatment of his subject been exhaustive, his excursions into collateral subjects would have been more acceptable. But he gives us a long chapter on the old spas and pleasure gardens of Islington and Clerkenwell with practically no justification, while, equally without justification, he omits any account of the tablets which have been placed on London houses that have been placed on London houses that have been dwelt in by illustrious men. These are "inscriptions" in every sense of the word, and their enumeration would have been a useful feature. Their number is constantly being added to, but we know of no complete list of them. The houses to which these circular tablets are fixed are necessarily houses with histories, and would have afforded material for a delightful chapter; whereas the substituted chapter on the Islington and Clerkenwell spas is neither relevant nor exhaustive. For why these spas any more than the Hampstead ones, or those which existed on the south side of the river? Moreover, it

is a little annoying to find Mr. Norman dealing with this subject in a confessedly perfunctory manner, with never a mention of Mr. Warwick Wroth's exhaustive work on the London spas and pleasure-gardens, published only last year. Other digressions suggest other uses to which Mr. Norman might have put his space. For example, it is entirely to be desired that London landlords and architects should be encouraged to fix signs, escutcheons, dates, and other distinctive marks to new buildings. This practice has, if we mistake not, been growing in favour of late years; and we wish that a chapter had been devoted to such modern signs and inscriptions. This would have rounded off the book nicely. But enough of criticism or hypercriticism. This is quite a good book; it is painstaking and pleasantly written, and its subject is one of real interest.

Signs, either painted or sculptured, entered into the daily life of old London in a way that we can now hardly realise. They were indispensable guides to the large proportion of Londoners who could not read. When an unlettered citizen required a jack-knife it was useless to tell him the name of the shopkeeper who could supply it; but if he were told that the best jack-knives were to be had at, say, the sign of the "Half-Moon" on Ludgate-hill, he had only to walk up Ludgate-hill until he saw a half-moon. In this way the signs of tradesmen and inn-keepers became household hieroglyphics; and they still yield many a secret of old London to the intelligent student of their weather-beaten faces. A good example of this communicativeness is to be found in the well-known stone in Panyer-alley. A naked boy is sculptured sitting on a pannier or basket, and holding in his hand a bunch of grapes. Below is the inscription:

"When ye have sought the Citty round, Yet still this is the highest ground."

Now the interest of this stone has generally been placed in this inscription; it really resides in the figure. It is quite doubtful whether Panyer-alley, which runs between Newgate-street and Paternoster-row, is the highest point in the City. That distinction has been claimed by Mr. W. J. Loftie for a point in Cornhill, and Leadenhall Market has a claim. In any case, the question raised by the inscription is a small one. The figure, on the other hand, is historically suggestive. Mr. Norman tells us that it probably dates from after the Great Fire, but it is equally probable that it is the successor of an earlier sign mentioned by Stow. Panyer-alley, according to Stow, was "so called of such a sign," and, in confirmation, a "Panyer," Paternoster-row, appears in a list of taverns of the fifteenth century. According to the Liber Albus, the sale of bread was only allowed in the King's open markets, and was sold in baskets or panniers. It may well be a true surmise that about 1430 Panyer-alley was a recognised standing place for bakers' boys with their panniers. The sign might thus be classified with that of the "Baker and Basket," which Mr. Norman has found still existing in Finsbury and Whitechapel.

Another interesting figure is that of

the wooden boy at the corner of Giltspurstreet and Cock-lane, put up to mark the spot where the Great Fire ended. Mr. Norman revives the delightful story of the Nonconformist preacher who thus moralised the theme of the Fire and this its memorial.

"He asserted that the calamity could not be occasioned by the sin of blasphemy, for in that case it would have begun in Billingsgate; nor lewdness, for then Drury-lane would have been first on fire; nor lying, for then the flames had reached them from Westminster Hall. 'No, my beloved, it was occasioned by the sin of gluttony, for it began at Pudding-lane and ended at Pie-corner.'"

A sign that has disappeared from this neighbourhood is one representing King Charles I.'s gigantic porter and his dwarf. Their portraits appeared side by side as a painted sign over the entrance to Bull Head-court, Newgate-street, but the sign vanished some years ago. Mr. Norman thinks it may still be in existence. The suggestion is exciting. A man with time and money to spare might give himself endless fun by undertaking the quest of the porter and

We have not space in which to follow Mr. Norman through his interesting and well-packed pages on Animal and Bird Signs, on Creeks, and on Miscellaneous In-scriptions. The book abounds with interesting facts and inferences. We could wish it had been more lavishly illustrated. The it had been more lavishly litustrated. The illustrations have quality, but their quantity is meagre, considering how necessary pictures are to a book of this kind. The sign of the "White Lion," in Upper-street, Islington, with its date 1724, is justly praised by Mr. Norman, but it is not illustrated; and there are many other signs which the reader could have understood "Maiden's Head," "one of the commonest London sculptured signs," is one. We presume that this is the sign which still abounds in Long Acre. Talking of Long Acre, Mr. Norman does not say anything about the large and spirited cock which tickles the sky-line at the corner of Drurylane. Perhaps it is not very old, but it can hardly be very new. There is also a pert grimy little cock (not mentioned) above Messrs. Pownceby's wineshop in the Strand. But Mr. Norman has discovered dozens of signs which we had missed. Not the least interesting is that of the "Three Squirrels," which is attached to the bars of the lower windows of Child's Bank in Fleet-street. The squirrels are within reach of one's stick, and they are delightfully quaint relics of a goldsmith's shop of the seventeenth century that stood "over against St. Dunstan's Church."

#### CITIZENS IN THE MAKING.

Studies in the Board Schools. By Charles Morley. (Smith, Elder & Co.)

This book is admirable journalism. Mr. Morley is always graphic, always dramatic, and never irrelevant. For some tastes he may be a thought too jaunty, but that is his only fault, and many readers will not agree to

that. For the object in view, a more fitting name could not be desired—the object being the instruction of the reading public in the methods of the Board school teachers of this city and the stubborn material with which they have so often to deal. The chapters making the volume appeared first in the Daily News; reprinted between two covers they form an organic whole of no small value to those interested in education, and of considerable entertainment to the ordinary reader. Mr. Morley selects with great skill. His instinct is unfailing; his eye is alert for saliencies, and he has the art of making a scene live. Few books contain so much life as this. Take, for example, the following passage, showing how the wild boys of Walworth have been so far tamed as to attempt dramatic renderings from the great poets:

"And then we had Tennyson's 'Dora.' You may remember how that hard-hearted Farmer Allan insisted that William (bis son) should marry Dora (his niece); but, as you may also remember, William declined, and was accordingly turned out of the house. It fell to my friend Tom Tipping to personate poor William, and never shall I forget the peremptory way in which that ragged urchin in the long overcoat and the two old boots declaimed:

"'I cannot marry Dorer; by my life, I WILL NOT MARRY DORER."

Poor Dora! He stamped his boot so that his toes caue clean through the leather. His friend Bob Duffy was Farmer Allan. Little Bob's eyes started out of his head, so enraged was he, as he turned round upon William and cried: 'You will not, boy!'—with what unmeasured contempt he hissed out 'boy'!— 'You dare to answer thus? But in my time [here he rapped his knuckles on the hard desk] a here he rapped his knuckles on the hard desk a father's word was law! 'This was altogether too much for my gravity. The idea of Bob, notoriously indifferent to parental admositions, coming out so strong! But he regarded me with a frown and went on in even sterner accents than before: 'Look to it [and here he looked at me as if I was William]; consider, William: William:

"'Take a monf to fink, An' let me have [very strong aspirate] an answer

to my wish;
Or, by the Lord [Lord tremendously emphasised],
that made me, you shall PACK,
And never more darken my doors again.'

The effect was terrific. Poor little Bob! I thought he would have burst the only button that held his clothes together."

Dickens himself would have enjoyed reading that passage. As to the advisability of teaching the boys of Walworth to recite in this way we say nothing. For the reviewer, at any rate, the justification of the proceed-

ing is Mr. Morley's description.

The lesson described in the chapter entitled "Citizen Carrots," which is, perhaps, the best chapter in the book, is open to no possible disapproval. Here Mr. Morley shows us the manner in which the theory of rates and taxes is explained by a clever master. Nothing could be more lucid and more desirable. Teachers are, of course, born and not made; a few more of such teachers as Mr. Morley describes and the public schools will be seeking the Board schools to recruit their staffs! We must not, however, give the impression that Mr. Morley's presentment of the case is complete. That

is not so. He says, for example, nothing of the tedious, uninspired teachers, nothing of the many instances of inconquerable dulness possessed by some children; but he. shows enough of success to cause the ratepayer who reads the book to feel no little satisfaction. A glimpse of the literary taste of young Hampstead is gained from the following dialogue between teachers and scholars:

" 'Who reads Charles Dickens?'

Great show of hands. Which book of his do you like best? Great show of hands and loud cries of Oliver Twist.'

'And what part of Oliver Twist do you like

'When he is in the workhouse' (note: the boys and girls in this part of the world don't call it 'workus,' and their aspirates are remarkably well placed) say some. 'When he's with the old Jew,' say others.

'Who was he?'

' Fagin.

'Why do you like Oliver when he was in the workhouse!

'Because he ASKED FOR MORE.'

The answer could not be bettered, not even at Eton. Sometimes, however, Mr. Morley found the scholar very far astray. Then, at Gravel-lane, in a school composed mainly of Jews, the following replies were volunteered to the question, "Who is Henry Irving?"—Henry Irving is a great singer on theatres; is a man who writes poems; is a poem; is the Queen's son; is an archbishop; is a coal-merchant; is a Dutchman; is the greatest laughable actor; keeps a sweet-shop in New-street. The same children atoned for these wide shots by some very apt definitions. A tragedy, said one, is a cryable play. A novel, said another, is a kind of book which tells you of loves. Lord Rosebery, said a third, is a great man on betting on horses. But the most memorable is this: "The Armenians were discovered by the English." The St. James's Gaustie, which to some extent shares this belief, should add the author of the remark to its staff.

Let us end by quoting some lines from the book of original verses, the work of his pupils, preserved by a Southwark master. The piece in question is called "Morning," and the poet was a boy of eleven:

"The leaves of trees do seem to talk Among the grassy hills of chalk. The sheep so merrily do play On this great and happy day. The river winding in and out Upon its long and awkward route, The policeman walking to and fro Upon his beat so long and slow. A boy so merrily at his play Singing a sweet and merry lay.

The judge judges on the judgment day,
While the prisoners look as white as clay.

And now this lovely day is done, People have got their great work done, And to bed they gladly go To lie and sleep so soft and low. Thou, glorious God, so good has been To make us happy and likewise clean."

This is not bad for a boy of eleven brought up in the Borough High-street! But Mr. Morley's book throughout shows us that there is more in the young Londoner than most people think.

# A WRITER FOR CHILDREN.

Lazy Lessons and Essays on Conduct. By W. B. Rands.

Lilliput Lectures. By W. B. Rands. Both edited by R. Brimley Johnson. (James Bowden.)

THESE books were, it seems, prepared for the press in 1882 for Mr. Strahan, but the death of their author in that year inter-rupted the proceedings. They are now, therefore, issued in collected form for the

Mr. Rands, according to Mr. Johnson's biographical note, was born in 1823. After attempting various methods of life he became a reporter to committees in the House of Lords. He resigned this post in 1875, became a professional journalist, and died in 1882. His writings appeared under various pseudonyms — Henry Holbeach, Timon Fieldmouse, T. Talker, and Matthew Browne—the last of which is the best known. His books for children won some measure of popularity—Lilliput Leves (1866),
Lilliput Revels (1871), Lilliput Legends (1872)
—but they are now little known. Mr.
Johnson extravagantly calls Rands "the laureate of the nursery," and states that "he stands somewhere between the simply didactic school of a hundred years ago and the highly imaginative writers of to-day"; adding, "he is as genuinely childlike as Miss Edgeworth, Jane and Anne Taylor, or the authors of *Evenings at Home*, but his conception of child-nature is more subtle and more philosophic." "Child-like" is an odd term to use. We cannot agree that in the foregoing sentences Rands' place is accurately established. Certainly he is not to be ranked with Miss Edgeworth and the Taylors, who possessed genius; and subtlety is not the most prominent of his characteristics.

The two volumes before us are distinguished rather for their author's kindness than anything else. They tell us nothing new of children, although they tell children many things of us. We cannot imagine children reading them alone if a story book, even a very familiar one, were within reach; but the chapters would come excellently well from a parent or governess. The style is so persuasive and so direct that a child could not possibly fail to carry away from the reading something to retain and think about.

An anecdote here and there, and now and then original verses—apt enough, but rarely, in our opinion, as "exquisite" as Mr. Johnson thinks them-now and then scraps of old poetry, help out the lessons very pleasantly. Among the subjects of Lazy Lessons and Essays on Conduct are Telling the Clock, Botany, the Middle Ages (a very interesting paper on a period which Rands knew well), Christmas Make-Believe in the Old Time, Telling the Truth, Moral Courage, Crossing the Road; while the Lilliput Lectures deal, among other subjects, with the World, Cities, Science and Philosophy, Art and Artists, Thoughts of God, Character, and In Church.

The two books are excellently bound and

# THE ACADEMY

# FICTION SUPPLEMENT.

# SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1897.

# THE NEWEST FICTION.

#### A GUIDE FOR NOVEL READERS.

Figure readers cannot complain of lack of novels. Reading eight hours a day for seven days, it would be a heroic task to master these twenty-seven stories—the harvest of the past week. For the Omnivorous there is a wide choice; even Particular readers will find something to their taste. A new novel by Stevenson is not an every-day occurrence; and there are many to whom a new story by Miss Mary E. Wilkins is also something of an event.

ST. IVES.

By Robert Louis Stevenson.

The last work we shall have from that master hand. It tells of the adventures of St. Ives, a French prisoner in England. Period: 1813. These surprising and delightful adventures begin in Edinburgh Castle, and there the heroine, Flora, first meets St. Ives, and there dies that magnificent rascal Goguelat. "'You have given me the key of the fields, comrade,' said he, 'sans rancune!'" St. Ives was taken down from Mr. Stevenson's dictation between January, 1893, and October, 1894. About six weeks before his death he laid the story aside to work on Weir of Hermiston. He never completed St. Ives. The last six chapters have been written by Mr. Quiller Couch from notes left by R. L. S. (W. Heinemann. 312 pp. 6s.)

JEROME.

BY MARY E. WILKINS.

A long story by the talented author of A Humble Romance, A New England Nun, and A Far-away Melody. The hero of the novel, Jerome Edwards, is one of Miss Wilkins's conscientious hardworking New Englanders. Jerome is certainly not for those who desire high-spirited books. It is as sad as sorrow. (Harper & Brothers. 506 pp. 6s.)

THE DORRINGTON DEED-BOX.

BY ARTHUR MORRISON.

Six stories by the other Arthur Morrison—that is to say, not the Arthur Morrison of A Child of the Jago and Mean Streets. They are exciting stories—even breathless; but if you want psychology you must go elsewhere. Pictures, too! The first is called "Mr. Loftus Deacon lay in a pool of blood." (Ward Lock & Co. 308 pp. 5s.)

UNKIST, UNKIND!

BY VIOLET HUNT.

A new nov:1, already familiar to readers of Chapman's Magazine, by the author of A Hard Woman. A gruesome story of witchcraft and murder among the county families of Northumberland, told by a lady's companion. (Chapman & Hall. 360 pp. 6s.)

FATHER AND SON.

By ARTHUR PATERSON.

Mr. Paterson's stories of ranche life in Texas, which lent distinction and interest to *Macmillan's*, may be recalled. Of late he has done less. This new novel appeared in the *Weekly Times*. It is English and begins with a football match. A serious study of masculine character. (Harper & Brothers. 329 pp. 6s.)

MISS PROVIDENCE.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD.

By the author of Lady Baby and A Spotless Reputation. This story is concerned with a girl so young in age and honesty that she insists on breaking her engagement with her lover because he has once wooed a governess. In the end they are restored to each other. (Jarrold & Sons. 323 pp. 6s.)

CECILIA.

By STANLEY V. MAKOWER.

A new novel by the author of *The Mirror of Music*, that remarkable study of music-madness. This also is the story of a girl—a singer—but the circumstances are less abnormal. An elaborate study of a very modern feminine mind. (John Lane. 319 pp. 3s. 6d.)

HERE THEY ARE!

By J. F. SULLIVAN.

Mr. Sullivan is known as a droll writer and droller artist. In this book he offers some fantastic stories conceived in a spirit of burlesque, with pictures from his own pencil. People who liked The Flame Flower, his last year's book, should like this. (Longmans & Co. 350 pp. 6s.)

CLAUDE DUVAL OF NINETY-FIVE.

By FERGUS HUME.

Another Mystery of a Hansom Cab? is the natural question on opening a new story by Mr. Hume—such is the disadvantage to an author of early popularity! In the present case the reader must discover the reply for himself. The book is a story of modern highway robbery by a lady instead of a gentleman of the road. (Digby Long & Co. 256 pp. 3s. 6d.)

AT THE CROSS ROADS.

By F. S. MONTRÉSOR.

A novel of feeling, "nobility of thought and purpose." There is a picture of cross-roads upon the cover, and the author of Into the Highways and Hedges explains in a rather sentimental preface that the book is so called because she has tried to describe how "first the man and afterwards the woman stood where two ways met . . . everlastingly together, and yet everlastingly alone." (Hutchinson & Co. 402 pp. 6s.)

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A light-hearted, fantastic book by the author of *The Cure for Souls*, &c. The hero is a shopman—but an exquisite shopman of good family, who loves a princess. (C. Arthur Pearson. 301 pp. 3s. 6d.)

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A VILLAIN OF PARTS.

By B. PAUL NEUMAN,

Rather an old-fashioned yarn in the first person. It took place "a long time ago now, longer than I care to set down on paper.' The dedication, like the story, is a little vague: "To my boys mine, yet not mine." (Harper Bros. 240 pp. 3s. 6d.)

DEILIE JOCK.

By C. M. CAMPBELL.

The story of a scamp, told by himself. He is a Scot, and he talks throughout in the vernacular. Thus: "I was born in the South Back o' the Canongate—it'll may be fifty years syne." Mr. Campbell is not a stylist. In the introduction his scamp "discusses" food and lights "a postprandial pipe." (A. D. Innes & Co. 342 pp. 6s.)

ONLY A LOVE-STORY.

By MRS. ROBERT JOCELYN.

Mrs. Jocelyn once wrote a novel called Only a Horse Dealer and her Drawn Blank may be remembered. This being "only a love-story," we may leave it for the present, merely remarking that the heroine is introduced as Veronia Blackendale, but becomes Veronia Brackendale two pages later. Her wish to change her name is thus apparent from the first. (Hutchinson & Co. 377 pp. 68.)

DOCTOR LUTTRELL'S FIRST PATIENT. BY ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY.

"The first patient, the first brief, the first book-aye, and the first love. What a halo remains round them." So exclaims the author of this story and of Not Like Other Girls, The Mistress of Brae Farm, and other novels that have pleased. Tells of a young doctor's struggles. (Hutchinson & Co. 322 pp. 6s.)

WHEN A MAIDEN MARRIES.

Mr. Deir has been reading a Greater not wisely, but too well. "An old-fashioned inn with circumambulent cows" . . . "An ugly little woman was ranting sulphuric acid gas from the platform" . . . "Away rolls the carriage, and away go bride and bridegroom, luck-battered into the unknown." (Digby, Long & Co. 296 pp. 3s. 6d.)

EL CARMEN.

BY GEORGE CRAMPTON.

This is a story of El Carmen Estancia and of two Englishmen who lived there, and of a woman they both loved; also of how Belleville boomed, and, like a bubble, burst, involving the whole countryside in a common bankruptcy. We have easily arrived at this summary of this story, because the author gives it himself in these very words. (Digby, Long & Co. 289 pp. 6s.)

JOHN OF STRATHBOURNE.

By R. D. CHETWODE.

On the cover a peasant clad in red, with cross-garter stockings, is sliding down a rope that overhangs a cliff. The heroine, in black, clings to his neck. The tops of fir-trees are still below them. The sun sets red and fateful. (C. Arthur Pearson, Limited. 301 pp. 3s. 6d.)

THE LORDSHIP, THE PASSEN, AND WE. BY FRED. T. JANE.

This humorous story, or series of episodes, is supposed to be told by Bill Baston, the village carpenter of Barroscombe. Bill has a pretty humour and a fine scorn for Radicals in red vans. His child is taught to pray: "O Lord, bless all this parish with aught that's to spare after father and mother and me; and send us Protection soon as may be. Amen." (A. D. Innes & Co. 312 pp. 6s.)

BY DARLEY DALE,

A doctor attending Sir John Dane loves his patient's daughter, Chloe, who is given to playing an accompaniment to her life on her violin. An overdose of opium kills her father, the result of a careless prescription written by Paul's twin brother. Whereupon a compact of impersonation is made between the brothers. Chloe knows nothing of this, and is left to play out her bewilderments and griefs on her violin. She is fiddling quite happily on the last page. (Bliss, Sands & Co. 352 pp. 6s.)

ODD STORIES.

By Frances Forbes-Robertson,

A collection of stories—pathetic, humorous, tragic. Some have appeared in the *Westminster Gazette*, *Pall Mall Magazine*, and elsewhere. (H. Constable & Co. 318 pp. 6s.)

THE TORRENTS OF SPRING.

BY IVAN TURGENEV.

No. XI. in the series of translations of the great Russian's novels. As before, Mrs. Constance Garnett is responsible for the rendering. The volume also contains two shorter stories, First Love and Mumu. (W. Heinemann. 406 pp.)

BY BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON.

Contains two short novels, "Captain Mansana" and "Mother's Hands" and is Vol. VII. in the series of Björnson's translations. "Captain Mansana" was first published in 1875 in a Norwegian periodical. Says the author: "Those of its incidents which appear most extraordinary are absolutely historical, the minutest details being in some cases reproduced. Mansana is drawn from life." Lassalle, we gather, was his prototype. (W. Heinemann. 224 pp.)

THE RAID OF THE "DETRIMENTAL." BY THE EARL OF DESART.

The Detrimental is a yacht, not a man. The raid is made upon a castle in the south of England, the captives are "a bevy of young ladies well known in the best society." The story is rich in improbabilities, written in high spirits, and interlarded with slang, as "I heard that he had 'dropped' an enormous sum, and was what his friends called 'about cooked.'" (C. Arthur Pearson. 424 pp. 6s.)

A TRAGEDY OF GRUB STREET.

BY ADAIR FITZ-GERALD.

The title-story fills two-thirds of the book. It is followed by shorter tales. They talk oddly in Grub Street: "Owen!" cried the strange lady. "Angela! Leper!! Wanton!!! came the horrible reply; and the spirit of Owen Considine passed away." (George Redway. 205 pp. 3s. 6d.)

BY JULIAN CROSKEY.

Clearly an early book—early books generally tell the life-story of a man of genius, and always without humour. We are introduced to Max in a Chinese prison, we accompany him to London, where he writes books and does other odd things. After 500 pages he leaves us (suicide). Here is a sentence Max addressed generally to the editors of newspapers a little before the end: "I die because I choose to die; because I am sick of the putrid vomitings with which you fill the world." Poor Max! Unfortunate editors! (John Lane. 503 pp. 6s.)

## REVIEWS.

The Charmer. By Shan F. Bullock. (James Bowden.)

This book is a warning to those who would write a novel round a farce motive. On the stage, before a not very discriminating audience, the complications of the "Charmer" might raise a laugh. In their present form they chasten rather than exhilarate; and, personally, I regret to find them associated with the name of Mr. Bullock, who can do good work when he keeps his humour under restraint. One cannot deny a certain element of absurdity in the idea of a newly married couple posing on their honeymoon as brother and sister. Good books have been built on foundations just as filmsy. But when the jest is revealed only after 250 person of just as filmsy. But when the jest is revealed only after 250 pages of some of the most low-comedy love-making ever penned, one wonders whether the secret is worth all the vagueness and inconsistency which it has cost Mr. Bullock to keep it. The little conspiracy involves, apparently—for at the critical moment of disclosure the heroine "quickly began pulling off the glove from her left hand"—the perpendicular wearing of gloves to hide the wedding ring, and also, I should think, creates a dramatic necessity for a preternaturally unvigilant landlady. It was a serious indiscretion for Mr. Bullock to keep the reader till the very end of the book in ignorance of the fact that Philip and Stella York are husband and wife. If we knew the true state of affairs earlier we might find some humour in the rivalries of three natives who aspire to the hand of the lady. Of these the chief is Mr. David Cuffe, concerning whom my principal regret is that he does not get the thrashing he is eventually threatened with. He is a pertinacious wooer, but not, I think, very adroit.

"At last he caught William (a rival, by the way) by the collar, and in his most impressive manner gave out his plan of campaign. William was to do this, not to do that; to say this, not to say that; to keep his wits awake and his tongue free; above all, to follow David's lead. 'Ye hear me, William,' said David at last; 'ye hear me? Now listen to me: you'll sit you side o' her, as I said, an' I'll sit this; when I say a word, you'll second it; when she says a word, answer polite; an' when I wink or cough, up you get an' slope.'"

Presently they heave in sight of the "Charmer," or "Herself," as Mr. Cuffe prefers to call her, and begin the attack:

"'Now just take meself lyin' here at me ease in the butiful sunshine,' David continued. 'Some people 'd think I could find somethin' better to do.

'Ay,' said William, 'ay, indeed.'
'But that's as may be,' said Mr. Cuffe, and crossed one leg over the other. 'For, after all, maybe few in Kyle has better reason to be here lyin' snug in the sun.

'Yes,' said Stella.
'Faith, that's so,' said Long William.
Suddenly Mr. Cuffe shot out his legs, sat up, and turned his little black eyes on Stella.

'Now I put it to ye, Miss York,' said he, 'what's your private opinion what me business here in Kyle is?' Stella turned and looked at him.

'Really, Mr. Cuffe,' said she, 'I have not the faintest notion.'
'No! Well, then, in two words I'll tell ye: to find a wife.'"

Mr. Bullock made a fatal mistake in spinning the story out to its present dimensions. It might have made an amusing short tale.

### A Girl's Awakening. By J. H. Crawford. (John Macqueen.)

In his works on the wild life of Scotland Mr. Crawford showed himself to be a writer of discernment. His novel fulfils the high expectations which were thus raised. It is not without faults; but

it is distinctly above the average.

The story, which is concerned with the lives and loves of village folk, opens prettily by the side of a trout-stream. Two wandering maidens, Margaret Grant and Gwendolen Anderson, surprise Alan Fordyce, who is fishing; and, from their confidential conversation after they have left him, it is clear that Margaret has had the youth very tenderly in her thoughts. In that respect, however, she is not alone. Dwells in the cottage next to Alan's another damsel—Narcisse, to wit—whose maiden fancy had ceased to be free soon after Alan had begun his evening visits to her guardian, an old astronomer. To be plain, Narcisse is resolved that Alan shall wed her. She makes him read The Mill on the Floss to her, and associates the hero and the heroine with him and herself, and the river with the stream of her own village. By and by he is the author of a novel; and there again, in happiness, and apparently with his assent, she finds the story of her opening life reflected. One night, when he has not called, she steals into a hut which he had built for himself in a wood, feasts her eyes upon him sleeping in the dark, and alips out before he is awake. In short, Narcisse makes hot love to the interesting young stranger who is sojourning in the quiet Scotch village by the German Ocean.

I state the theme thus fully in order that I may emphasise

the ability with which it is developed. The plot has little in it; yet it is played upon with arresting skill. In the hands of a mediocrity in the art of fiction the story would have been coarse or lugubrious, or both; but, with his naturalist eye, Mr. Crawford saw all the pitfalls, and he has avoided them. Narcisse is not the erotic hussy which my account of her doings might suggest. She had read Alan's book, of the subject-matter in which, incident-

ally, Mr. Crawford remarks that

"if the cottagers themselves were unaware that some of their experi-ences were touching—the commoner of them most touching of all—the same is true much higher up the scale. We know our faces only as cast back from the looking-glass. The complexion and features of our experiences are shown to us for the first time in a picture, and surprise no one more than ourselves."

By delicate touches such as that Mr. Crawford maintains my interest in his heroine. Narcisse is no green-sick girl inviting a squalid doom.

"There hangs, somewhere in the galleries of Rome, a twin picture, by the brush of Titian, representing human and Divine love—the chill absorption in things celestial; and the kindlier, warmer, clinging round earthly objects. With unerring instinct the artist has in both cases chosen a woman, seeing that the sex [sic] has in it the possibilities of the two extremes. Narcisse experienced the swift transition from one mood to the other. What might suit a placid and unexacting nature only mocked her with a false hope. The stoicism of a joyless life, the dull, unimaginative discontent which goes by the name of patience, the self-deceptive hypocrisy of pretending to be pleased with the unpleasing, were not within her compass. Nor did it really make it any better to dream of something beautiful and forget the facts. The hollowness revealed itself."

Mr. Crawford's faults are "defects of his qualities." dialogue is sometimes difficult to follow. Apparently he took to heart the dictum—of Mr. Anthony Trollope, if I remember rightly —that in real life people conversing speak only five or six words at a time, and that in that respect fiction should be realistic. Consequently, his dialogue is snippety and too allusive. Then, at the bidding of a similar restraint in larger matters, five or six chapters towards the close are undramatic, even almost lifeless. For two-thirds of it, however, the book is excellent. When I reflect upon it at the close, I find myself astonished at having been so much absorbed. Of Alan I have learned next to nothing. He has hardly ever opened his mouth. Excepting the three Miss Aldcastles, whose prattle is excellent comedy, all the other characters are equally dumb. There is next to no action in the novel. Only Narcisse, practically, does anything. Nevertheless, I seem to be familiar with everybody, and to have witnessed a very moving play. It is a striking illusion. Blight. By the Hon. Mrs. Walter R. D. Forbes. (Osgood, McIlvaine & Co.)

"What," asks a certain wise old Duchess, for whose sake alone one would willingly read this book—"What can be the pleasure of being always disagreeable? I can understand losing one's temper now and then, and liking to hold one's own; but with her it is such a dead level; she is never pleased or pleasant except by accident." The allusion is to the Lady Easton of the book. Not many novelists would have the courage to write a story round so unlovely a character—unlovely not in point of morals, but of intense and incurable selfishness. Yet, with the insight and conscientiousness of an artist, the unity of purpose is maintained throughout the book, which, on the other hand, is by no means overloaded with psychological analysis. Blight is a skilful study of a woman from whom Nature, while endowing her with an intense craving for love, withheld the power of inspiring it. How her jealousy and resentment work out the tragedy of her life is portrayed with consistency. But if Mrs. Forbes writes with wide sympathies and large experience of the feminine temperament, she is also an author of shrewdness and observation. One seldom meets a more sagacious Duchess than the lady who says:

"Has it never struck you that it is the very women who are convinced that they are not heaven-born mothers who become such? They give that they are not heaven-born mothers who become such? They give themselves heart, soul, and intellect to the study of their children, and know them with a knowledge undreamt of by your motherly mothers, babbling baby-talk, and telling you that maternity is the highest blessing! Such women seem to think themselves singled out by Providence, instead of being the ordinary instruments of reproduction, and they consider that, having borne children, nothing further is required of them, and they have but to enjoy the gratitude of their offspring and the approbation of the world and its Creator."

Her theory of education, also, differs from the other lady's:

"When a boy is good-looking, well born and well endowed, he is bound to be spoiled, and if home does not do it the world will. Now home spoiling, with lots of love in it, will never hurt a fine nature, and the bad ones will go to the devil anyhow, so they don't count. The world's spoiling is another matter. A boy who at home has a hard, or even a dull, neglected time, always swallows the world's indulgences open-mouthed, and asks for more. He is completely taken in, and when at last he finds out what it is all worth, and how he is expected to pay for it, it sickens him, and, if he be not the worse for the experience, both morally and physically, he may thank God for an exceptional nature."

It must not be supposed that this is either a dull or a didactic book. With the one exception, its folk are quite pleasant company.

# The Plagiarist. By William Myrtle. (Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier.)

The plagiarist was Gilbert Heath, and he purloined from a safe a MS. by the late Thomas Rushworth, and incorporated it in a work called "Italy's Place and Influence in the Domain of Pictorial Art—a Critical Estimate." The reviewers praised it unconditionally, and compared him with John Ruskin, the "Aristotle of Art," and Mrs. Jameson the "female Ruskin." He, therefore, threw up and Mrs. Jameson the "Jemale Russin." He, therefore, threw up the law and took to literature, and in his recreations "he nurtured, so far as he possibly could, the artistic side of his nature. He listened to recitals by such virtuosi as Paderewski, Joachim, Sir Charles and Lady Hallé—he witnessed performances by Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry." He also married the daughter of his professor and inherited £95,996. But he was found out by a critic who thought and spoke as follows:

"The crime of plagiarism is becoming far too common. It is time for the critic to use the knife unsparingly. Examples must be made, else this widespread sin of a literary age will never be eradicated. The sad thing is, that the clergy are among the worst sinners in the matter of plagiarism. . . ."

Heath was exposed. A few nights later he broke open his father-in-law's safe and was shot by a mechanical burglar alarm. The Plagiarist, you see, is not too probable a book. It is, indeed, quite harmlessly silly. I should conjecture William Myrtle to be a young lady.

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Offices: 43, Chancery Lane, W.C.

# NOTES AND NEWS.

ERTAIN friends of the late Poet Laureate have contributed their recollections of him to the Memoir which we review this week. The name of Prof. Max Müller is not included, and yet the Professor's memories of his occasional meetings with the poet possess an interest, and are told with an engaging frankness which some of the others lack.

The letters to the Queen in the Memoir proclaim Tennyson to have been a courtier of the first water. But sometimes the natural man overbore the courtier. Prof. Max Müller tells how he once complained to the Queen that he could no longer stay in the Isle of Wight, on account of the tourists who came to stare at him. The Queen, with a kindly irony, remarked that she did not suffer much from that grievance; but Tennyson, not seeing what she meant, replied, "No, madam; and if I could clap a sentinel wherever I liked I should not be troubled either."

The annoyances to which he was subjected from the curiosity of tourists had its humorous side—for the onlookers. "It must be confessed," remarks the Professor, "that people were very inconsiderate. Rows of tourists sat like sparrows on the paling of his garden, waiting for his appearance. The guides were actually paid by sightseers, particularly by those from America, for showing them the great poet. Nay, they went so far as to dress up a sailor to look like Tennyson, and the result was that, after their trick had been found out, the tourists would walk up to Tennyson and ask him, 'Now, are you the real Tennyson?'"

It is on record that Tennyson visited Fitzgerald at Woodbridge in 1876, and by

internal evidence we are made aware that, whether mutton cutlets or not, the meat was tough. The duty-letter written by the bard after his departure is not given, but Fitzgerald's reply to it is. It reads, under all the circumstances, rather sadly, one thinks:

thinks:

"I am glad you were pleased with your short visit here. Perhaps you will one day come again; and, if you will but give warning, and no nieces are in possession of the house, it shall be ready for you, and some tender meat provided. Somehow, I, when you were gone, felt somewhat abroad; and, a few hours after, went to an old village by the sea, Dunwich. I was wishing I had made you come with me, over a wild stretch of heath too, but there was no room in the little inn, and, daresay, very tough meat. That fatal reed sticks in my side, you see. But I am still yours, and all yours, sincerely, E. F. G."

While "last words" on Burns are being pronounced in the columns of the daily press, it is interesting to record some opinions of great poets elicited long ago by Mr. Aubrey de Vere. "Read the exquisite songs of Burns," Tennyson once besought him. "In shape each of them has the perfection of the berry, in light the radiance of the dew-drop: you forget for its sake those stupid things, his serious pieces." On the same day, Mr. de Vere met Wordsworth, who praised Burns as a great genius who had brought Poetry back to Nature, adding: "Of course, I refer to his serious efforts, such as 'The Cotter's Saturday Night'—those foolish little amatory songs of his one has to forget." This story of contrariety was told by Mr. de Vere that evening to Sir Henry Taylor, whose comment was: "Burns's exquisite songs and Burns's serious efforts are to me alike tedious and disagreeable reading."

The unpublished poems in the Memoir have been selected according to Lord Tennyson's expressed desire. Some he put aside for preservation, others, according to his latest injunctions, have been chosen by the late Lady Tennyson and by the present Lord Tennyson from several volumes of unpublished poems, and by them submitted to a committee of friends (named by the late Poet Laureate), who have fully and finally approved of the selection.

Among the unpublished poems is one called *Havelock*, November 20, 1857—so fine, so stirring, that one wonders why Tennyson rejected it—

- "Bold Havelock march'd, Many a mile went he, Every mile a battle, Every battle a victory.
- "Bold Havelock march'd, Charged with his gallant few, Ten men fought a thousand, Slew them and overthrew.
- "Bold Havelock march'd, Wrought with his hand and his head; March'd, and thought, and fought, March'd and fought himself dead.
- "Bold Havelock died,
  Tender, and great, and good,
  Aud every man in Britain
  Says 'I am of Havelock's blood.'"

The death is announced of Francis Newman at the age of ninety-two. His was a career as strange as it was long. It began in the England that had no Oxford Movement, no Carlyle, no Thackeray, no Tennyson, no Gladstone, and no Disraeli. William IV. was king when Francis Newman ceased to be a Fellow of Balliol, having already decided in his own mind that there was something wrong in his creed. In scholar-ship at Oxford he was the superior of his brother John Henry Newman, whose greater career and fame, however, put those of Francis under eclipse. It is a little unfortunate, too, for his posthumous fame that his death should be announced on the very day that the reviews of Tennyson's biography filled the papers, although the Times, despite its five columns on the late Laureate, spared space for a fair biography of the Professor, and gave him a leading article besides.

PROF. FRANCIS NEWMAN looked the manhe was. His picturesque figure retained much of its vigour to within very recent rears, as he walked about the roads of Weston-super-Mare; but his sight latterly failed him, and a fall downstairs, a few months ago, sent him to the bed from which he did not rise. Mentally, he was alert almost to the last. His two books, The Soul: Its Sorrows and Its Aspirations and Phases of Faith, had a place of their own; but George Eliot wrote of them in 1874 as an influence even then of "far-off days," though it was an influence she admitted she had felt. To her he had become "poor Mr. Francis Newman." Various other works from his pen, including four volumes of Miscellanies, were received with the respect due to his name—their titles are hardly heard of now. A stay in Bagdad gave him early in life a love for the East. He was a vegetarian; he loathed cruelty to animals; he did not smoke; he did not drink; and he spoke modern Arabic fluently.

By the death of Sir John Gilbert in his eightieth year a great figure in Victorian Art has been removed. Yet of late years public gratitude to the artist had changed into gratitude to the art patron. When Sir John Gilbert ceased to paint pictures he began to present them, and many fine works, chiefly historical, are now in the municipal art galleries of London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool—his gifts to us and to our heirs for ever. As an illustrator Sir John Gilbert was long supreme. He was connected with the Illustrated London News from the first; and it has been computed that his drawings in that paper numbered thirty thousand. As an illustrator of books, too, Sir John Gilbert was successful: witness his illustrations to Shakespeare, Longfellow, and Cervantes.

WE welcome Mr. George Gissing to the ranks of the humorists. His story in the English Illustrated Magazine called "Spellbound" is of humour the subtlest. It tells of a man who debauches himself upon Free Libraries. He neglects his work, he neglects his wife, he neglects himself for the Free

Library. He does not care in the least what he reads, but read he must from morn till evening. So long as it is print nothing else matters. "The scent of newspapers, mingled with the odour of filthy garments and unwashed humanity, put him beside himself with joy; his nostrils quivered, his eyes sparkled."

WE refer elsewhere to the fact that the value of the new édition de luxe of Mr. Kipling's works, not yet published, has risen from six to nine guineas. Meanwhile, the early editions of Mr. Kipling's books command high prices. We observe that Mr. Karslake, of the Charing Cross-road, asks for Wee Willie Winkie in its first edition and wrapper, £2 2s. A similar copy recently fetched £2 14s. The first edition of The Barrack-Room Ballads, uncut, is valued at £1 5s., and the first edition of the Second Jungle Book at 9s. These prices quite outshine those obtainable for first editions of R. L. Stevenson's works. Across the Plains, 10s.; Ballads, 10s. 6d.; The Ebb Tide, £1 1s.; The Black Arrow, 10s. 6d.—such are the prices asked for uncut first editions of these books.

On November 1 will be issued a new magazine for young people under the title Harper's Round Table. Mr. H. B. Marriott Watson (too long silent) will contribute a serial called "Treasure Trove."

LORD COLERIDGE has been delivering a lecture at Ottery St. Mary on some matters of local history. It has high memories, quite apart from its fame as the birthplace quite apart from its fame as the birthplace of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the great-great uncle of the lecturer. For in that parish Sir Walter Raleigh, too, was born, and the house now owned by Lord Coleridge was the meeting-place of Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell.

WE trust that the stories from Tibet of the brutal treatment of Mr. Henry Savage Landor, the inheritor of a great name, may prove to be exaggerated. The pilgrimage to Lhassa, even in the interests of a London daily paper, is, of course, a risky adventure, and the discovery of the disguise of the supposed pilgrim may easily be followed by consequences less than agreeable, though we may hope that they stop short of torture with hot irons and of a sword that is arrested in its last fatal flourish only by the Grand Lama. Anyhow, Mr. Landor has reached the Indian frontier alive, though with wounds numbered at twenty-two.

Mr. Anthony Hope's approaching visit to America has inspired a writer in The Philistine, an amusing "little fad magazinelet," to the following parody:

"Glittering Anthony Hope seems dead!
Read at his last new book an hour."

That is the story, this its thread,

He penned the tale, but it lacks his power. Beginning to languish, too, like the rest;
Much has been changed by his fame I think:

By ravenous publishers opprest,

He drowns his genius in seas of ink.

"It is not too late yet, Anthony Hope, You can redeem yourself, firm and true; For good stars meet in your horoscope, Your earlier characters live and woo,
Flirt, laugh, skirmish—fight as of old,
And bewitch us—this cannot be denied;
Toward "The Prisoner" and "Dolly" no

heart is cold, They are fellow mortals-naught beside

We love you, Anthony, all the while!
There are better things yet to come, hold:

There is place and to spare for your villain's guile,

And your nonchalant heroes—overbold. So hush—here's a bit of advice to keep;
We want your genius fresh from your hand.

There, that is your secret, don't try to reap Gold for mere trash—you understand!"

Dick's Coffee House is to be pulled down to enable an adjoining insurance office to expand itself. Thus another of the glories of Fleet-street is doomed. "Dick's," origin-ally "Richard's," has many literary traditions, the most touching being one connected with Cowper. It was while "at Richard's Coffee House at breakfast" that the poet read in a newspaper a letter which seemed not only a libel on himself, but showed that the writer was acquainted with his intention to commit suicide. Flinging down the paper with a passionate gesture, he rushed out to seek a house to die in, or, if none offered, "to poison myself in a ditch, where I could meet with one suffi-ciently retired."

Mr. James Lane Allen, the author of The Choir Invisible, has been giving some information concerning himself and his work to an interviewer of the Springfield Republican. His remarks on local colour support Mr. Barrie's contention that everything of importance to us happens while we are children, Says Mr. Allen: "Nearly all material of a writer's work that comes from nature is usually gathered un-consciously during childhood. The impressions then received are deepest, strongest, and clearest. They are instinctive, and all the better for being unconscious, so that in middle of life an author, having changed his environment, may write for years regarding nature in the region of his childhood without ever once revisiting it or adding a single new impression."

Mr. Allen's opinions concerning the state of American fiction at this moment are interesting: "Never before," he said, "was the interest in American fiction so keen, so genuine, and so widespread. Never before were there so many publishers eager to handle a good American novel or to pay such prices for it; never before were there so many critics on the whole press of the country so ready and so cordial to rate a book at its full value, and never before was there so studious and so sympathetic an audience of readers."

Mr. Allen continued: "I give it only as an opinion, and it may be worth nothing whatever, but the literary situation in this stars?"

"Do you take my meaning, madam, and will you shine upon my dark side, like those kindly stars?"

country just at present is peculiar. The Scotch school that have been carrying everything before them are now a waning influence. Among the English novelists not a one is gaining on this side. Kipling himself has never touched an American subject in prose without a distinct injury to his reputation. The Russians have had their day. With the exception of two or three foreign novelists new to us, the national attention is directed towards the future of American fiction. The novelists of to-day may not be in that future, but they are certainly trying to be."

A VOLUME of verse by Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton, called *The Coming of Love and Other Poems*, will be published by Mr. Lane on the 20th. The book will contain a purple of Poems. number of Romany poems.

On Tuesday next, Messrs. Macmillan & On Tuesday next, mession their new Co. will instal themselves in their new premises south of Leicester-square. tendency of publishers to move westward is as curious as it is marked, and Messrs. Macmillan's move from Bedford-street to St. Martin's Street will seal the title of the neighbourhood of the Charing Cross to be a new publishing centre in London. Messrs. Macmillan's new premises are very extensive, and they have been built and fitted up in a manner worthy of the firm. The building, which has entrances in St. Martin's-lane and Whitcomb-street, stands partly on the site of an old galleried inn, "The Nag's Head," which flourished when Whitcomb-street was called Hedge-lane. The neighbourhood has literary associations with Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. Martin Burney and his daughter Fanny, and others.

A GERMAN translation of Mr. Percy White's novel Corruption is now appearing in the Frankfürter Zeitung. It will afterwards be published in book form.

THE Elizabethan Stage Society announce for their third season the revival of Ford's tragedy, "The Broken Heart"; also of Middleton and Rowley's drama, "The Spanish Gipsy." There will be revived besides a comedy by Beaumont and Fletcher; and Ben Jonson's fragment, "The Sad Shepherd." The first performance of the season will be given on Tuesday evening, November 2, at the Mansion House, by in-vitation of the Lord Mayor. The play chosen for representation on that occasion is "The Tempest."

HERE is another example of the way dedications should not be written. It appears in front of a new novel, called A Return to Nature:

"To M. M. N.

"WE spoke of stars once, madam. My star-lore is but little; but this I know of the star Jupiter, that there are other stars of which some always shine upon his dark side.
"Happy star Jupiter!

# WHAT THE PEOPLE READ.

#### I.-A SOLICITOR.

I HAD just ordered lunch when my solicitor walked into the club dining-room, and sat down by my side. Tregarthen is accounted prosperous in his profession. I remarked that I had just met a certain author in the

"Who?" said Tregarthen.

I repeated the name. Tregarthen laid down the menu-card,

gave his order, and then turned to me, "Now, what attitude," he said, "am I expected to assume in the face of this information?"

"Well," I said, "I thought you'd be interested. His book -

"Oh, he writes books?"
"Of course. You know him by name."

"What did you say his name was?"

Again I repeated it.

Tregarthen looked critically at his cold beef, and shook his head.

"I never heard of him," he said.

"Seriously?" I asked.

"Are you trying to get at me?" said Tregarthen.

"But don't you—well, don't you—try to keep up with current literature?" "If you mean, do I read current books;

well, I don't. Can you suggest any reason why I should?"
"One likes to be in touch with the thought

of the day."

"Literary men," said Tregarthen, "have a curiously exaggerated opinion of their importance. Do you suppose that I don't think for myself? Because I do, pretty continually. And why should I pay six shillings to this friend of yours—what is his name ?-to do my thinking for me?"

"But don't you feel any curiosity when you see the advertisements of a new novel, with a taking title by, say, Anthony Hope, or Hall Caine, or H. G. Wells, or ——"

"Certainly. And if I do I take the opportunity when I am invited out to dinner of asking the girl next me to tell me about the new novel. Girls can generally give you a good idea of the last new novel. And when she has told me about it I am extremely glad that I haven't wasted my time by reading it. I manage to get a pretty good notion of current literature that way. Now and then I read a book—I admit that-but that is only when I take a girl in to dinner who tells me of a plot that doesn't bore me to death."

"Then you depend entirely on the most incompetent of critics?"

Tregarthen ate his cold beef in silence for a few moments.

"Girls are not so silly as they look," he

"But don't you want to be amused?" I said; "to see pictures of life, to-

"I don't depend on novels for that," said Tregarthen. "I don't want silly people to

teresting part of it doesn't come into court. But if a man-your friend, for instance, what's his name? - Anthony-Anthony-

"Trollope—"
"Hope," I said.
"Well, Anthony Hope, or any of those interesting the can make a story as interesting the can make a story as interesting. people, if he can make a story as interesting as Blantyre v. Hopkins, then I'll buy his book. What's more, I'll read it. But he can't."

Tregarthen set down his knife and fork, and looked round to call for his bill. He

is a rapid and bad luncher.
"My dear boy," he said, "a solicitor doesn't want a novelist to tell him what life is like."

It struck me that in all probability a good many people do not read the books they are supposed to read. I decided to investigate.

#### PARIS LETTER.

#### (From our French Correspondent.)

It is undoubtedly a sad thing for a nation to feel itself morally above its literature. It is by no means necessary for poets and novelists to instruct or to preach; but it should be far from their mission to degrade with the ferocious consistency of the modern French masters. France is not better than any other land, but assuredly for those who know her she is not worse. All these interminable volumes of scandal, documents, vicious gossip, "mufleries" and "rosseries" at first sicken, and then exasperate. The falsity of them is so obvious, so cheap, so irredeemably, vulgarly venal. Suppose, for one moment, what everybody agrees to deny, that life in Paris was what Gyp, Paul Hervieu, Marcel Prevost and Company persist so lugubriously and monotonously in painting, then what remains for them to reveal year after year? The ignoble tale of adultery has been told so often, without poignancy, struggle, romance, or remorse, that now surely it may be conceded there remains not a detail to invent for the readiest wit. We know it all so well. The young viscount who scents himself to pay an afternoon call for the first time on a beautiful and enigmatic marquise between two ages, will be her lover in the French sense of the word before twenty-four hours have elapsed. And then all the old, old details; the bachelor's entresol, the subdued lights, the delicate silks and couches; the double veil, the hired vehicle, the eager entrance and anxious exit. Ever and ever the same details of toilet and gesture, as if the whole wretched business were not more stale than last year's bread, less inviting than the sewer-washed waters of the Seine in its city

All this pornography, which, in giving France's reputation to the dogs and foreign invent situations for me when I've got them ready made every day in my office. Take the case of Blantyre v. Hopkins, for example."

"I never heard of it," I murmured.

"Possibly not," said Tregarthen. "It hasn't got into the papers, because the in-

fortable incomes—a blessed result rarely obtained by real literature—bids fair to win its own extinction from excess of zeal. Young writers are rising on all sides in violent protest against this eternal servitude of sensuality. Not so long ago M. Maurice Bouchor shook himself free of the gross chains of the famous "Théâtre Libre." His new "Hymn to Venus" might be endorsed by the Social Purity League, and romantic youths could not recite a finer prayer:

"Permet, que le désir, patiemment dompté, Se transforme en profonde et virile tendresse, Fais que l'amour en moi devienne la bonté.

Et souffre, en cette nuit que le silence

oppresse, Que sans être—hauté par le remords cruel Je redise le nom, doux comme une caresse De ma rieuse amie, aux yeux couleur de ciel."

The critics are so struck by this new fresh note of virtue and sentiment in French poetry to-day, that they quietly expect to be projected out of symbolism and every other industrious research after obscene nonsense back into the placid shallows of the morning "'Pon my conscience," one of romance. critic exclaims, "I believe the poet of the future will be some amiable young man, who will tell us that the beloved betrayed

him, and that he was full of grief."

M. Maurice Pugo (if it were not for Maurice de Saxe and Maurice Barrès, we should be tempted to believe there is a spiritualising influence in the name of Maurice wafted from Belgium) violently attacks, in the worst possible French—which M. Gaston Deschamps likens to a French acquired in German translations—the miserable inadequacy and corruption of the present system of education in France. The State, alas! we learn on all sides, is cynically indifferent to the crude young souls tumbled recklessly by indifferent or ignorant parents into the brutalising mould of its despotism. M. Jean Aicard, in one of his novels, has already passionately lamented the moral and social wrongs of young midshipmen and sub-lieutenants debarred from the innocent delights of romantic engagement and love-marriage, and condemned to waste and stain their youth in degrading ties. M. Art Roë has lifted a virile and impressive voice in behalf of his youthful military comrades, and with an eloquence both tender and martial sketches the note of reform in camp and barrack. And on behalf of French youth of all classes Sully Prudhomme has written:

"Custom in France, where real betrothals are unknown, makes the condition of young lads who respect themselves very difficult from the age of puberty until marriage. A young man is practically left to himself to solve the cruel problem imposed upon his conscience by our social state. How can he yield, without degrading himself, to the most imperious instincts of the senses, of which the heart becomes an accomplice, before he may legally satisfy them? Hence scruples full of anguish, weaknesses, and heroic struggles, all an interior

M. Maurice Pugo would lighten this diffioult period by the accepted joys of fresh and innocent love, by the excitement of a chosen engagement and an early marriage of inclination. He would suppress the dot, fatal blight of romance in France. This young man would be spared the now obligatory ordeal and consecration of the brutal-ising Latin Quarter, the squalid bohemianism and the tristeful sprees. He would suppress inheritance as well as the dot, holding that man should work for whatever he obtains and enjoys, and he would reform literature and art. Naturalism he well describes as a solemn and gloomy renunciation of beauty. The popular masters, whether Bourget or Zola, have all equally repudiated man's inalienable right to reverie and aspiration. Psychology he holds to be mere mechanism, and beseeches young writers to turn their back upon venality, commerce, scandal, the basenesses of industry and fabrication. And I think he is not preaching in the desert.

# THE BOOK MARKET.

#### THE BOOKSHOPS.

WEST CENTRAL.

T the large shop at Holborn Bars they make much of éditions de luxe. The new twelve-volume edition of Mr, Kipling's works, not yet published, is there offered for subscription. But I hear that the market value of the set has already risen from six guineas, its published price, to nearly nine guineas. Only 1,050 copies are offered to the public, and the few copies not already bespoken will be "held for the rise." The éditions de luxe of Mr. Meredith's and Charles Lever's novels seem to be having a safe, uneventful passage through the bookshops. I noticed that Messrs. Bell & Son's new four-volume edition of Vasari's Lives of the Painters, just published at thirty-six shillings, was well to the front. Of new novels the three most prominent were In Kedar's Tents, The Martian, and St. Ives. The last-named is bound in an almost black cloth and is not ineffective in a shop window. Mr. Bret Harte's Three Partners was also given a good place. Among serious books were Mr. Gardiner's second volume of his History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate and Mr. Andrew Tuer's History of the Horn-Book. Mr. Morris's romance, The Water of the Wondrous Isles, was to be seen in the large paper Kelmscott edition; and all who did not run could read how in the dim wood called Evilshaw-what a foil to Holborn !-

"was neither highway nor byway, nor woodreeve, nor way-warden; never came chapman thence into Utterhay; no man of Utterhay was so poor or so bold that he durst raise the hunt therein; no outlaw durst flee thereto; no man of God had such trust in the saints that durst build him a cell in that wood."

A hundred yards further west a small window makes a good show of St. Ives, and The Martian, and In Kedar's Tents. These seem to be the three stories of the moment. The Christian is still everywhere to be seen, but its climax was reached quickly some there remain a minority who are genuinely

weeks ago. Mr. Lang's Dreams and Ghosts, Prof. Dowden's French Literature, and the new Eversley edition of Green's The Making of England, were to be seen in this window. A new cheap edition of Sartor Resartus, put forth by Messrs. Service & Paton, was also

given a good chance.

In Oxford-street, between the Tottenham
Court-road and Regent's-circus, a large
corner shop had all the books of the moment well placed. Unkist, Unkind! and What Maisie Knew were hospitably entreated; Maisie Knew were hospitably entreated; The Christian was given the company of The Scapegoat, The Deemster, and The Manxman. Messrs. Nimmo's new six-shilling edition of the "Border Waverley Novels" was in easy view, and — for a surprise—space was found for those fine books of the late Mr. Hamerton, The Intellectual Life and Human Intercourse. A corner shop usually devotes its best window to the books of the moment, and its second best to the books of yesterday and to series of classics. Here may be found very full sets of the "Minerva," "Scott," and "Silver" libraries. The "Mermaid Series" of plays, the Dryburgh "Waverley," and cheap sets of Lytton, Thackeray, Dickens, Ainsworth, and Macaulay.

In a large Strand bookshop all the probable books were so well represented that it seemed unprofitable to take note of them. A less conspicuous feature in-This was the immense terested me. number of books which are not books. Exclusive of series of guide-books and technical hand-books I noticed the following:

How to Read Faces. How to Mesmerise. Chiromancy How to Read Heads. Etiquette for Girls. Grammar of Palmistry. Things not Generally Known. Curiosities of Science. Popular Errors Ex-

plained. Familiar Sayings, Phrases, Proverbs, and Family Mottoes. The New 6d. Ready Reckoner. The Law of Landlord

and Tenant. peeches and Toasts. The Book of Ready-made Speeches. The Dream-Book and Fortune-Teller. The Chairman's Guide.

Two Thousand Familiar Quotations.

Dainty Dishes. Character in Faces, Features, and Forms. How to Read Character in Handwriting. Etiquette of Good Society. The Gentlewoman's Handbook of Education. Interest Tables. Cobbett's English Grammar. How to Dance.

Cooling Cups and Dainty

Drinks. When was it?
British Chronology.

their Cures. Practical Instruction in Mesmerism. Cole's Fun Doctor. Pros and Cons: A Guide to the Controversies of the Day.

Common Ailments and

These books were priced from sixpence to eighteen-pence, and it is certain that they have their public.

#### VILLAGE READING-ROOMS.

THE march of culture is too apt to omit villages from its route. It is true that, as a rule, villagers have little time, and less inclination, to indulge in the delights of realing anything beyond the paper; but, although this is the case with the mass,

interested in books, in stories, biography, travels, poetry, natural history. It is hard that they should—often if not generally—have such poor literature served out to them.

It seems to be the belief of those who are responsible for the libraries of village reading-rooms that anything is good enough for a tired working man. The periodicals of fifty years ago are piled on shelves for his benefit; he is pestered with theological works of the driest nature, or his intellect usually a pretty shrewd one—is insulted by little stories, the integrity of whose moral character is considered to atone for the feebleness of their execution. Only by rare chance is a new book of real merit or vigour laid before him. As a general rule, he is kept half a century behind his day. Considering what a quantity of good reading matter is now produced year by year, this is a hard condition of things.

Let us look at an ordinary village readingroom. It is long and narrow. The floor is bare, or partly covered with linoleum. The walls are washed. There are a few pictures: reproductions in colour after Birket Foster, an engraving of Maclise's picture of Wellington and Blucher, three or four botanical charts, the church almanack coloured by hand-probably by some young parishioner not unacquainted with Ministering Children, and a copy of the rules. The rules are always prominent. They fix the subscription—sixpence per month—and name the penalties which follow if it is not paid; they forbid gambling, smoking, bad lan-luage, and the removal of books or papers; they state that the hours of opening are 10 to 10, that coffee and cocoa are obtainable from 6 p.m., and so on. At one end of the room is a bagatelle-board. The chairs are of solid wood. On a side table is a pile of back numbers of the Illustrated Lon News and one or two odd copies of the Sketch. On the mantelpiece are boxes of dominoes, draughts, and chess.

Above these is the library, contained on two long shelves. The books are odd volumes of *Chambers' Journal*, a complete set of Chambers' Miscellany, two or three Waverley novels, Beeton's Dictionary of Geography, Uncle Tom's Cabin, a few Ballantynes, a volume of Sunday at Home, five or six volumes of Eliza Cook's Journal, and a score more of books, mainly devotional. Such are the attractions of the village

reading-room. It is not remarkable that the room is unpopular, and that country labourers are behind the times. The village is small, but there must be some forty men in it, to say nothing of boys (the minimum ageat which one may join is fourteen), who would be glad to have the opportunity of reading something more fresh and modern than most of the books mentioned. A few members may drop in on Saturdays to see the pictures in the new Illustrated London News, and bagatelle exerts some sway; but the shelves are neglected, or their books read and re-read in a kind of stupor. And no wonder! These are not books for 1897. Chambers' Miscellany was an admirable publication in its day, but its day is over. The pity of it is that within a mile of the reading-room are half a dozen large houses wherein superfluous books—good fiction, good poetry, good history, good biography, good travel—are lying in heaps.

#### AMERICAN PUBLISHING.

#### Some Interesting Figures.

THE proportion of English books published in America to the works of native writers has for years appeared to be very large. It has, however, been diminishing ever since the amendment of the copyright laws prevented the flooding of the American market with cheap editions of English books. The American author, relieved of that ruinous competition, is doing much better, and the position at the present moment is seen in the following table of figures, based on an analysis of this autumn's announcements. The national origin of 616 books just published, or just about to be published, in the States is accounted for as follows:

Tall Tricing to the	(	of Englis Origin.	h A	Of merican.
Biography		32		28
History		7		36
General Literature		38		52
Poetry		5		18
Fiction		48		136
Travels		12		16
Art and Archæology		12		7
Music and the Drama		3		4
Science and Nature		4		23
Politics and Economics		4		19
Philosophy and Psycho	logy	_		15
Theology and Religion		22		63
Sport		12		-
an and although the		199		417

The figures for books on Sport and Philosophy are very curious.

# THE WEEK.

THE event of the week has, of course, been the publication of the biography of Lord Tennyson by his son. Another new work of importance is the second volume of Mr. Gardiner's History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. A critical biography of Albrecht Durer, by Mr. Lionel Cust, and Private Papers of William Wilberforce, edited by Mr. A. M. Wilberforce, should be noted. New novels, which are very numerous, are catalogued and described elsewhere.

Two books in which history is helped out with fiction may also be mentioned. These are The Diary of Master William Silence and The Maiden and Married Life of Mary Powell, afterwards Mistress Milton. The following is a complete list of books we have received in the past week:

#### THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

- A PRIMER OF THE BIBLE. By W. H. Bennett, M.A.
- THE HERODS. By F. W. Farrar, D.D. Service & Paton.
- REASONS FOR THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE HEXATEUCH, By Rev. Isaac Gibson. George W. Jacobs & Co. (Philahia). 50 cents.
- STODIA STRAITICA, No. VI.: A PALESTINIAN SYSTAC LEC-TIONARY. Containing Lessons from the Pentateuch, Job, Proverbs, &c. Edited by Agnes Smith Lowis. C. J. Clay & Sons. 12s. 6d.
- SERMONS PREACHED IN ETON COLLEGE CHAPEL, 1870-1897. By Francis St. John Thackeray, M.A. George Bell & Son. 3v. 6d.

- CRITICAL AND EXPONICAL COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLES TO THE PHILIPPIANS AND TO PHILEMON. By Rev. R. Vincent, D.D. T. & T. Clark (Edinburgh).
- Babylonian Implument on the Bible, and Popular Belters. By A. Smythe Palmer, D.D. David Nutt.
- A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE. By Arthur Cushman McGiffert, D.D. T. & T. Clark (Edinburgh). 12s.
- THE MASTER'S WATCHWORD. By Rev. Jervis Coats, M.A.
- James MacLebose & Sons (Glasgow).
  Two Essays on Theism. By Andrew Seth, M.A. William Blackwood & Sons. 2s. 6d.
  A GUIDE TO BIBLICAL STUDY. By A. S. Peake, M.A.
- Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d.
- THE HOLY BIBLE, COSTAIRING THE OLD AND NEW TESTA-MENTS (Eversley Series). Vol. L.: Genesis to Numbers. With an Introduction by J. W. Mackail. Macmillan &
- THE GOSPEL IN THE EFISTLES. By J. Guinness Rogers, B.A. Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

#### HISTORY AND RIOGRAPHY.

- ALFERD, LORD TENNYSON: A MEMOIR. By his Son. 2 vols. Macmillan & Co.
- FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XV. By James Breck Porkins. 3 vols. Smith, Elder & Co.
- A MENOIR OF WILLIAM PRESELLY OF TORQUAY. Edited by Hester Pengelly. John Murray. 18s.
- UNDER THE RED CRESCENT: ADVENTURES OF AN ENGLISH SUBGROW WITH THE TURKISH ARMY AT PLEVNA AND ERZEROUR, 1877-1878. Related by Charles S. Ryan, M.B., and John Sandes, B.A. John Murray. 9s.
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- By George C. Napier, M.A. THE SECRET CARISET OF HISTORY. Translated from the French by W. C. Costello, Charles Carrington (Paris). RICHARD HARLUTT: AN ADDRESS TO THE HARLUTT SOCIETY. By Sir Clements Markham. Bedford Press.
- THE MAIDEN AND MARRIED LIFE OF MARY POWELL, APPER-WARDS MISTRESS MILITON. Edited by the Rev. W. H. Hutton, B.D. John C. Nimmo. 6s.
- HEROES OF THE NATIONS: ULYSSES S. GRANT. By William Conant Church. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 5s.
- THE STORY OF THE EMPIRE SERIES: THE STORY OF INDIA. By Demetrius C. Boulger. Horace Marshall & Son.
- SSIP FROM A MUNIMENT ROOM: BEING PASSAGES IN THE LIVES OF ANNE AND MARY FYTTON, 1874 to 1818. Transcribed and edited by Lady Newdigate-Newdegate. Dawld Nott
- THE CHILDREN'S STUDY: FRANCE. By Mary C. Rowsell, T. Fisher Unwin. 2s. 6d.
- PRIVATE PAPERS OF WILLIAM WILDERPORCE. Edited by A. M. Wilberforce. T. Fisher Unwin. 12s.
- MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS: PROM HER BIRTH TO HER FLIGHT INTO ENGLAND. By David Hay Fleming. Hodder &
- HISTORY OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND PROTECTORATE, 1640-1660. By Samuel Rawson Gardiner, M.A. Long Green & Co. 21s.

### POETRY, ESSAYS, CRITICISM.

- ENGLISH MINSTERLEIE. Edited by S. Baring-Gould, B.A. T. C. & E. C. Jack (Edinburgh).
- THE CANTERBURY PORTS: THE PORTICAL WORKS OF HENRY KIRKE WHITE. Edited, with Biographical Introduction and Notes, by H. Kirke Swann.
- SKRTCHES FROM OLD VIRGINIA. By A. G. Bradley. Mac-
- Sauron Resaurus. By Thomas Carlyle. Service & Paton. In. 6d.
- ALBRECHT DÜRER: A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND WORK. BY Lionel Cust. Seeley & Co. THE DIARY OF MASTER WILLIAM SILENCE. By the Rt. Hon. D. H. Madden. Longmans, Green & Co. 16s. THE WAYER OF THE WOMBROUS IALES. By William Morris.
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#### SCIENCE.

THE PRINCIPLES OF CHEMISTRY. By D. Mondelieff. Translated from the Russian by George Kamensky. Edited by T. A. Lawson. 3 vols. Longmans, Green & Co.

- ALTERNATE-CURRENT WORKING. By Alfred Hay. Biggs &
- FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ELECTRICITY AND MAGNETISM. BY
- C. H. W. Biggs. Biggs & Co. 3s. 6d.
  AN EGENERALE TREATISE OF THE METRIC SYSTEM OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES. By J. Hamblin Smith, M.A. Longmans, Green & Co.
- SLEEP: ITS PRINCIPLE OF PARROLOGY, HYGINE, AND PRINCIPLES. By Marie de Manacéine. Walter Scott.

#### FICTION . NEW EDITIONS.

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# DRAMA.

Thas been a full and varied week for the first-nighter. New theatrical enterprises continue to be entered upon, the Avenue and the Royalty being the latest of the smaller houses to open, though generally, in the West-end, managers complain of bad business. With new suburban theatres at every turn—East, West, North, and South—it is not to be wondered at that the flow of suburban playgoers towards what Mr. Hall Caine calls the "Devil's Acre" should be checked. Before the season opened I ventured to warn West-end managers of what was coming. The evil time is already upon them by all accounts, and they have not seen the worst of it yet. But commercial considerations weigh little with the theatrical speculator, who looks upon his business as, what it is, a species of gambling. The result is, that although probably not one-half of the West-end theatres can be expected to pay their way, they are never long without a tenant. When Mr. George Alexander has returned to the St. James's, and the Court Theatre has been re-opened with the new programme there in preparation, every West-end theatre will be occupied.

The Avenue, under Mr. Fitzroy Gardner's management, tries the triple bill, a class of entertainment which gives the theatre somewhat of the variety of the music-hall. The triple bill has been successful and may be so again, but to achieve that end its constituent parts must all of them be better than those Mr. Gardner has given us. Over the entire Avenue programme as it stands there is the trail of the amateur. The late Sir Charles Young wrote a few fairly good plays, notably "Jim the Penman," but he ranked to the last as an amateur dramatist. In any case he is represented in the Avenue bill by one of the least important of his productions—"The Baron's Wager," a trifle much favoured by amateurs. Mrs. Oscar Beringer, again, who is responsible for the second item, "My Lady's Orchard," is a comparatively new hand, while Messrs. Gayer Mackay and Claud

Nugent, author and composer of "The Mermaids," the musical fantasy which is given the place of honour in the bill, are quite unknown. Unfortunately, Mr. Gardiner cannot lay claim to discovering new talent. His triple bill, in a literary and musical sense, hardly rises above the level of private theatricals; and considering the competition that rages at the West-end, this cannot be deemed an adequate equipment for what has always ranked as one of the least fortunate of the theatres. "My Lady's Orchard" is, however, an interesting proof of the existence of dramatic talent in the Beringer family. Not only does Mrs. Beringer write the play, but her two daughters—Miss Esmé and Miss Vera Beringer—sustain the chief parts in it, the latter being the child-actress who won notoriety in "Little Lord Fauntleroy" seven or eight years ago.

Miss Esmé Beringer, already favourably known as an actress, has a predilection for male characters, which first found expression some little time ago in Romeo. In the present instance she plays a mail-clad knight of the troubadour period, and in this capacity fights a sword and dagger duel with Mr. Brookfield. The performance is remarkable enough as a tour de force, but I must confess to having small sympathy with such exhibitions, which give prominence to the actress at the expense of the play. The Elizabethan dramatists had to content themselves with boys or young men in their female characters, and it does not appear that the public interest in the performance was disturbed by that arrangement. But we are not habituated to Amazon heroes, and if Miss Esmé Beringer wishes to pursue her art with success she may be advised to cultivate a little more sincerity than her present achievement would imply.

THE existence of the child actress is a serious reflection upon the claims of acting to rank as an art. Infant prodigies have been numerous enough on the stage, but one never hears of a Royal Academician or a newspaper leader-writer of tender years. Acting must be much less an art than a natural aptitude, in which intelligence counts for little. Otherwise, how are we to account for Miss Vera Beringer's failure to sustain, as an educated young lady, the histrionic reputation she acquired in her childhood? The fact is, that while she has increased in intelligence, she has outgrown her original aptitude for the stage. At all events, one fails to discover in her acting now any ability beyond that of the average young lady who develops a taste for private theatricals; whereas as a child she excited the wonder and admiration of the playgoing public. At the conclusion of the run of "Little Lord Fauntleroy" Miss Vera was sent back to school, and there apparently she has unlearnt most of what she ever knew of acting. It is curious to note how often the infant prodigy fails in after life to redeem the promise of childhood. Perhaps Miss Vera Beringer's worse fault is her voice, which tends to shrillness. To

an actress, the importance of a sweet, winning voice can hardly be overrated. No greatness is to be attained without it. Sarah Bernhardt, Eleonora Duse, Ellen Terry, and Ada Rehan, have all that voix d'er to which every chord in the heart of an audience is so responsive. By dint of intonation alone—that is to say, independently of the sense of the words uttered—it is possible to bring tears to the eyes of an auditor, as experiment readily shows. But to that end you must have des larmes dans la voix.

For proof of the charm that may lie in the voice, one need only turn to Miss Ada Rehan's Rosalind, now being given at the Grand, Islington, whither Mr. Daly has chosen to take his company this season rather than disturb the run of "The Geisha" at his own theatre adjoining Leicester-square. Conspicuous for its artlessness (in the best sense), its true womanliness, its innocent coquetry, its purity and its general wholesomeness, Miss Rehan's Rosalind has some claim to be regarded as the most delightful that the present generation has seen. The heroines of Shakespeare's comedies are beautiful types, and Miss Rehan appears to have a wonderful affinity for them all. We have still to see her as Beatrice, but unfortunately Mr. Daly's plans do not this year embrace the presentation of any novelty, his company being engaged for the first time in a provincial tour, of which the Grand Theatre, Islington, is a well-known étape.

The new farce of the present season given at the Strand, the Globe, and the Royalty is not of particularly high quality. "The Purser" is English, "Miss Francis of Yale" is American, and "Oh, Susannah!" is English again. Now English and American farce is nearly always inferior in wit and intellectual resource to French; it tends to buffoonery. In "Miss Francis of Yale" this is especially noticeable, so excellent a comedian as Mr. Weedon Grossmith being condenned to take part in a pillow-fight in a bedroom, this being the climax of the action. "The Purser" is a more refined production. It is concerned with what may broadly be described as amatory life on board a P. and O. liner, and tells its story without any noisy exaggeration. For that reason, however, it declines into the groove of platitude, lacking as it does the wit and the observation of the best French pieces of its class. "Oh, Susannah!" would also be a rather tame story of the misunderstandings resulting from a marriage being kept secret were it not for the comicalities of a hitherto almost unknown actress in the unpromising part of a lodging-house maidof-all-work. Miss Louie Freear is a genuine low comedian in petticoats. She possesses the instinct of drollery that characterises Mr. Arthur Roberts, with whom, as a born humorist, she is entitled to be classed. The laughter-loving public will look forward to Miss Louie Freear's further appearances with interest.

# BOOK REVIEWS REVIEWED.

The Poetry of Robert Burns." Edited by William Ernest Henley and Thomas F. Handarson.

To see critics at loggerheads one has only to read the reviews of Messrs. Henley and Henderson's completed "Burns" Two sets of

reviewers declare themselves sharply—those who praise and those who blame; but each of these sets is divisible into two. Thus among the laudatory critics we find some who praise with knowledge, others whose praise, though perhaps more extravagant, is less convincing. Of the forcibly eulogistic reviews the Standard's is a good specimen. Clinching a short well-packed article, this critic defends Messrs. Henley and Henderson's severely judicial view of Burns's character as follows:

"God have mercy on me, was one of the bitter things that Burns wrote of himself; 'a poor, damned, incautious, duped, unfortunate fool! The sport, the miserable victim of rebellious pride, hypochondriac imaginations, agonising sensibility, and Bedlam passions." Surely, with such a confession in view, even though there is much that is tender and noble to throw into the opposite scale, Mr. Henley is right in claiming that the poet knew himself as his apologists have never known him and will never know. Neither poverty, disappointment, nor the bitter limitations of his lot are enough to account for the tragedy of such a life. The flerce restlessness of the man was due to his unvanquished conscience, and the rankling sense of the contrast between his moral vision and his moral failure. Such a conclusion may not be acceptable to the more perferyid, not to say idolatrous, fellow-nountrymen of a poet who broadened the path of humanity and interpreted its common heart, but justice lies that way, and all of mercy that so great a man need ask."

The Pall Mall Gazette, like the Standard, recognises that the editors' portrait of Burns is based on the one he drew of himself in his moments of complete insight:

"It is the portrait that Burns has drawn of himself in his posms, but which his admirers in the past and even to this day have tried to modify so that he should appear a more respectable person than he ever thought of laying claim to be. . . . With such a man as Burns, who has expressed himself so fully in his postry and love of his letters, the attempt to supprass the truth was doomed to ignominous failure. . . The result, however, is entirely satisfactory; and although the false Burns suffers, the true Burns is convincingly presented to you."

The Saturday Review says of Mr. Henley's attitude to the poet:

"We confess that it is one with which we find ourselves in almost perfect sympathy. He sees in him a peasant who was a great poet, who wished to be a 'buck,' and he presents him in those lights to us without palliation and without sanctimoniousness. The Common Burnsite, as Mr. Henley calls the mere abject worshipper of a doctored portrait of the poet, will probably give a succession of piercing screams as he perceives illusion after illusion being torn away. Sometimes, perhaps, Mr. Henley is too truculent with the Common Burnsite, and sometimes he seems to lose the sense of proportion a little. On the whole, for instance, we believe that he has made out a case against that sentimental spectre, Highland Mary, but was she worth the expense?"

This critic finds in Mr. Henley's style some-

thing more than the "vigour" detected by some critics, or the "truculence" that has angered others:

"At every turn he lightens the tissue of his disquisition by some phrase or flash of suggestive description which delights the attention. What could be better, for instance, than the little vignette of the wild snatch of song murmured by 'some broken man, in hiding among the wet hags; some moss-trooper drenched and prowling, with a shirtful of sore bones'?"

The Chronicle's critic is less perspicuous and decisive than the foregoing on the question of Burns's character, but he thinks that no rational Burnsite has cause of complaint against Mr. Henley. He finds fault with the violence of Mr. Henley, who "has been at no pains to choose the smooth phrase or the sober-suited epithet which turneth away wrath." Not a few reviewers reproach Mr. Henley for his strong language. "Will nothing," asks the Saturday, "persuade Mr. Henley how much he loses by talking of 'Browning's ridiculous verses,' and 'that irascible, pompous ass, the Earl of Buchan'?"

The Marning Post treads gingerly. It does not so much say things itself as surmise what "devotees of the poet" will say. With the Westminster it represents the first class of those who blame—the timidly hostile. The Westminster says:

"We must confess that there is something about the work of Messrs. Henley and Henderson which occasionally jars. We are no blind admirers of the poet, and are quite ready to admit his faulta and failings, but we do not think it was necessary to rake up and give quite such prominence to some of the most shady passages in Burns's life. Mr. Henley for without any injustice he may be held responsible—gives one the impression that he takes a pride in detailing and discussing the moral offences of the poet. The impression may be quite erroneous, but there it is."

We now reach the outspoken criticisms of Burns's defenders. These gentlemen do not mines matters with Mr. Henley. The Glasgow Herald's critic, after quoting some of his strongly worded passages, such as the one in which he alludes to the poet's "genius for paternity," says:

"Supposing enthusiastic Scotsmen are wrong about Burns—and many of them do talk sad nonsense about him—it is certainly not by such provocative criticism that they are to be reformed. Of course, however, Mr. Henley's estimate of Burns is quite as erroneous as that formed by the commonest Burnsite, and it errs by enormously exaggerating one aspect of the poet's character and career. That Burns's passions were too strong for him, and that they marred his life, no one with any eye to fact will deny; but that lewdness and a faun-like quality were the most prominent features of his genius and character as he is now and will be remembered by the world is an utterance monstrous and morphid in the extreme. . . . That, in fact, his genius should be represented as a kind of sublimation of 'sculduddery,' is one of the strangest instances of perverted taste and judgment that the history of criticism has to show."

But the fiercest reply comes from Claudius Clear, in the British Weekly. Claudius means fight. In his first paragraph he says with horrid calmness—that the book is out. In his second he is suspiciously cordial. In the third he viciously aketches

Mr. Henley's career as a journalist while tucking up his wrist-bands. Then he delivers blow after blow. Here are a few:

"The essay is not upon Burns the man or Burns the poet. It is almost entirely upon Burns the rake. Over the sadder and buser incidents in Burns's career Mr. Henley literally gloats. Every amour is described as particularly as Mr. Henley dares."

"Something... should be said of the attack on Mary Campbell.... Let it be remembered that we know nothing about Mary Campbell except from Burns himself, and that all he tells us and all she inspired within him makes us believe that she sleeps in a pure grave. We decline to apply to her any of the epithets Mr. Henley has resorted to his slang dictionary for, because she was a woman, because she is now defenceless and dead, because we know that her poet thought of her memory with lingering and sacred tenderness. Of course these reasons are Greek to Mr. Henley, but he must be content to leave room in this planet for those who understand them."

"Mr. Henley's idea of the Kirk of Scotland is that it was in 1759 still offensive enough and still potent enough to make life miserable, to warp the characters of men and women, and to turn the tempers and affections of many from the kindly and natural way. He also speaks of the life of Scotland as made up of theology and fornication, and so forth, and so forth. I can scarcely think that any Scotsman will give himself the smallest trouble to reply to such statements. He will simply say, 'You know nothing of Scotland and nothing of Scotlish religion, and no man could ever explain either to you.'"

"Mr. Henley has done his best with the side

"Mr. Henley has done his best with the side of Burns he understands. He has shown great industry and he has spared no pains. Scotsmen will take what helps them, and will wish Mr. Henley a better temper and a better understanding. They love Burns and they pity him. They may not love Mr. Henley, but him too they will pity, if they trouble to read him."

We do not know, nor does it concern us, whether Mr. Henley is angry with Claudius Clear; but we cannot help thinking that Claudius must be angry with the Scotsman for not being angry with Mr. Henley. The Scotsman's critic actually writes:

"The truth is, Mr. Henley understands Burns a great deal better than the majority of those who have written about him. . . . Pine as his essay is as a piece of literary history and criticism, it is not less so, rather more so, in its summing up of the life of Burns. Certainly he extenuates nothing; but that is not what he is there for. There have been more sins of this kind done by writers about Burns than can ever be covered by the affectation of charity; and it takes good will and more to make so true a portraiture as his. To seek a comparison from the art of painting, the work is like a picture by Meissonier, so accurate in detail, so much in little space, pathetic and serene. Every word of it is well felt and well written."

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